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HENRY AUGUSTUS COIT



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HENRY AUGUSTUS COIT

FIRST RECTOR OF
SAINT PAUL'S SCHOOL
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

BY
JAMES CARTER KNOX
MASTER AND FORMER SCHOLAR AT SAINT PAUL'S

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
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ILLUSTRATIONS

Henry Augustus Coit	<i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>From a Photograph.</i>	
Henry Augustus Coit	<i>facing page 92</i>
<i>From a daguerreotype about 1854.</i>	
Facsimile of Inscription, written by Dr. Coit	“ “ 123

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I

“One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is blown.
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity —

Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity;
Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy quiet ministers move on,

Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil;
Laborers that shall not fail, when man is gone.”

— MATTHEW ARNOLD

CARLYLE begins his *Life of Sterling* by remarking that “a true delineation of the smallest man and his scene of pilgrimage through life is capable of interesting the greatest man.” This generalization simply puts in epigrammatic form the well-known fact that

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a true transcript of any man's life and character, if sufficiently searching and intimate, will be likely to interest all men. But it must be a "true delineation," and any attempt at a sketch of a man's life, where either defect in truth or excess in laudation becomes the dominant note, would be a failure, just as the lack of verisimilitude spoils a novel. The writer will endeavor to avoid overstatement of every kind, but may fairly begin by saying that Henry Augustus Coit was generally conceded to be a great man both in character and achievement. The press notices and resolutions that appeared at the time of his death leave no doubt as to his place in public estimation. The real "scene of his pilgrimage" was St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H., and his life the forty years of arduous toil spent in her borders. For we can safely neglect his boyhood and early education, or at least leave them in other hands, as being without incident or real significance. Doubtless many a clue to his character could be found in the details of his childhood in his pious home at Plattsburg, N. Y., and of his adolescence

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under the devout and imaginative Muhlenberg at College Point, Flushing; but details are lacking, and there is literally no one alive who can supply them. A few lines, taken from the "*Horae Scholasticae*" of March 8, 1895, will give us the main facts of his life up to the date of his call to the Rectorship of St. Paul's School.

"Dr. Henry Augustus Coit was born January 20, 1830, at Wilmington, Del., where his father, the late Rev. Joseph Howland Coit, D.D., was rector of St. Andrew's Church. In 1832 his family went to Plattsburg, N. Y., his father having been elected rector of Trinity Church in that city. There his youth was passed until his fifteenth year, when he was sent to the well-known boarding-school at College Point, Flushing, L. I., under Dr. Muhlenberg. In due course he went to the University of Pennsylvania, but, his health giving out, he spent a winter in the South, chiefly in Georgia. On his return, he accepted the position of assistant professor of the ancient languages at St. James's College,

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Maryland. He remained there about two years, and then, in 1851, assumed charge of a large parish school under the direction of Dr., afterwards Bishop, Bowman at Lancaster, Pa. There he met Miss Mary Bowman Wheeler, to whom he was subsequently married. While at Lancaster he was ordained Deacon by Bishop Alonzo Potter, the ceremony taking place at St. James's Church, Philadelphia. His ordination to the priesthood followed one year later, in 1854, in Plattsburg, Bishop Horatio Potter officiating. He was at this time serving efficiently as missionary at Ellenburgh and Centreville, Clinton County, N. Y., having recently left his charge at Lancaster. Here he remained until, having been invited by the Trustees of St. Paul's School to become its first Rector, he came to Concord, April 3, 1856. His marriage had taken place one week earlier, March 27, in the Church of the Epiphany at Philadelphia."

As the public life of Dr. Coit was wholly uneventful, and as his contribution to history

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was limited to his long term of intensive labor in an atmosphere almost conventual, it is obvious that our task will be to deal with character rather than action,—with character as illustrated in the functions of administrator, teacher and pastor. And yet one hesitates to analyze Dr. Coit too intimately; it seems almost unfair. In his lifetime no one ventured to discuss him in public; in his presence it would have been impossible. He had the secret of modesty, and his great reserve smothered all efforts at probing. Moreover, any attempt to explain Dr. Coit to one who had never seen him will be difficult, for he combined qualities that are not often found together. John Jay Chapman's rather transcendental picture of his old school-master in his monograph entitled "School Influence," is a true one on the whole, and is indeed a great tribute, supplementing in its idealism and loftiness of vision the more commonplace appreciations of the rest of us. But such a picture is incomprehensible to most men, and lifts

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its subject to such a degree that Dr. Coit seems to walk across the distant horizon of school life with a spectral effect not unlike that of the Wandering Jew in Sue's novel, or of Moses in Georg Ebers' "Uarda." No, Dr. Coit was a real man, with defects and limitations, and he would have been greatly astonished that his character needed anatomizing of any sort; it was all very simple to him. Such a consideration, however, will not deter us from the effort to bring out what was really great in him, what lifted him head and shoulders above most men of his type.

Surely, the basis of Dr. Coit's character is to be found in his Puritanism. His ancestors on both sides were evangelical, Bible-reading New Englanders, and his passion for righteousness was a natural result of birth and environment. On such a stock was grafted, as time went on, the emotional and romantic temperament of the ecclesiastic, such as the Oxford movement begot in men of historic sense and native mysticism. This is a strong combination, and to it can be traced most of

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the features of Dr. Coit's spiritual outfit. An alumnus writing about his old master will inevitably recall the qualities that touched him individually, that most affected his own life. He may feel that he owes a great debt to the man that presided over the scene of his boyhood life at St. Paul's, and yet he has perhaps never analyzed nor confessed it. What was it that hypnotized boys and prodded their consciences? Well, the feeling of an old boy towards Dr. Coit and the old school is compacted of the sum of many memories, of memories of good things freely given and unconsciously received, of learning imparted, of high principles absorbed, of shelter from evil, of happy days and healthy sport, in short, of a fine ideal which time and adversity cannot destroy even though they obscure. Out of this general welter will emerge the figure of the Doctor, who vitalized it all: his alert intuitions that penetrated the most callous nature; his insight into motive; his fanatical purity, his probes to vanity, utter routing of the forward and

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bumptious, his irony, sometimes cruel, for the self-complacent and pragmatic, his aggressive challenge to duty, gentle self-revelation to the over-shy and reticent, compelling sympathy, sustaining hand to the weak, appreciation of ability and talent with cautionary signals; and, beyond all, a pervasive atmosphere of life lived in an empyrean, well above the sordid and "terre à terre." All this may sound strange to some ears to-day, but it did not sound so at the time of Dr. Coit's death, for it was the burden of all utterances about him from press and pulpit. Canon Douglas, in a letter to the *New York Evening Post*, declared that "if any man in America deserved a public funeral, it was the late Rector of St. Paul's School." Bishop Doane averred that Dr. Coit had laid the "deepest foundations and built the best superstructures that have been laid or built for the Christian training of boys." And this from a writer in the *Boston Transcript*: "The great school that he built may seem to the world the chief evidence of his ability,

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but to these old boys the stamp of his character set on their lives and enduring unchanged amid the passing influence of later years will be the great proof of his worth as servant of God and leader of men." Dr. Roberts, in the *Concord Monitor*, said that "the characters of men who have come from St. Paul's School were forged in his heart." Dr. Ferguson dwelt on "his almost awful righteousness and his enthusiasm for righteousness in others." Dr. Hall Harrison attributed the secret of his influence to the "spirituality and unworldliness of his nature. He lived close to the cross of his Redeemer." The Trustees of Groton School declare in formal Resolutions that "he has given to American teachers, especially those in Church schools, a great and noble ideal of their office. Through the influence of his leadership other schools have been founded, and to his memory Groton turns with deep gratitude." The *Manchester Union* says that "The state will mourn his death as that of a benefactor, for, in the work which he has done

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and perpetuated by a wise establishment, he has honored New Hampshire with exceeding great honor." Finally, an editorial in *The Churchman* pronounces him greater than Arnold.

The comparison between Arnold and Coit is inevitable; they had worked in kindred fields and had made a like contribution to the cause of secondary education in their respective countries. Yet the men were in some respects unlike, and the parallel is useful chiefly in enabling us to interpret a less known person through contrast with a better known person of the same general type. They agreed in a common enthusiasm for the moral education of youth, and in the conviction that the Humanities furnished the best medium for the training of the mind. But the stage, the methods and the motives were different. Dr. Arnold devoted fourteen years of his life to reforming a corrupt and custom-ridden school of 400 years' standing; Dr. Coit gave forty years to founding and

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orienting a new one on lines almost novel in this country. The rôles were different and each showed masterly wisdom. Had positions been exchanged, neither might have succeeded. Dr. Arnold worked in a fixed society and in an ancient system; Dr. Coit labored amid crude social conditions and created a type of school, at first deemed an exotic, but now become popular. Dr. Arnold was a notable scholar, historian and publicist; Dr. Coit, though unquestionably a scholar, never wrote a book. Dr. Arnold had a consuming interest in outside questions and took a prominent part in many famous controversies; Dr. Coit confined himself in an extraordinary degree to his one mission. Dr. Arnold was a Latitudinarian and a radical, with a temperament prone to doubt. Dr. Coit was conservative to the backbone, with a fiery faith that fed on the Greek Testament and Thomas à Kempis. And yet these two men met on the common ground of passionate zeal for righteousness, and of firm conviction that education is worthless without it.

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Like Arnold, too, and like his still more eminent son, Matthew, Dr. Coit accepted as a settled dogma that Latin was the eternally proper instrument of mental training, quite forgetting that, when Dean Colet, Erasmus and other Humanists made it the basis of secular education, they had no choice but to select that tongue which not only was the Esperanto of scholars, but which at the Renaissance treasured beneath its symbols all extant knowledge, whether fact or philosophy. In truth, Dr. Coit and both the Arnolds belong a little to the pre-scientific era of education. We shall have occasion to refer to Dr. Arnold more than once in the development of our subject.

It is now nearly sixty years since the founding of St. Paul's School, a period of time long enough to afford perspective and data adequate for impartial generalization. The original trustees are long since dead, and, with a few exceptions, their immediate successors and co-workers are old and passing. Memories are imperfect, experiences

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vary, and temperaments are diversely susceptible. If the intention and spirit of the Fathers is to be caught from living lips, there is no time to be lost. A separate "paper" might well be devoted to Dr. Shattuck and the Boston group of Trustees. The school was indeed fortunate in her founder, George Cheyne Shattuck, the distinguished physician. His own education had been liberal and thorough, and partook of the best that could be given at the Boston Latin School, the Round Hill School at Northampton and Harvard College. Possibly as a Round-Hiller he may have imbibed through George Bancroft a little of the community feeling of Brook Farm. At all events, he determined to found a school in the country, where the training of body, soul and spirit should be equally accomplished; where, as he said, "green fields and trees may be used to teach of Him who made them," and where fraternal peace may be the proper fruit of comparative isolation. The school once fairly launched, Dr. Shattuck

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modestly retired into the background. Although he was never a Trustee, for nearly forty years he was the constant upholder of the first Rector in all his plans, and the pressure of his rare elevation and singleness of heart must have been felt in all the initial development of the place.

Over such a projected school, beginning with three boys, Henry Augustus Coit was invited to preside. "He was told, 'You have possession of land and buildings, but we cannot promise you a salary, and you must derive your support from the fees of scholars.' He began the work under these conditions. It was emphatically a work of faith." He was but twenty-six years of age, and had had no special training for academic life, if we except a short term of service at St. James's College and three years at a parish day-school at Lancaster, Pa. Perhaps he was secured at the psychological moment; a few years later, and his retiring, studious nature might well have led him to decline the appointment. But fate willed that he

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should be "taken at the flood," and the growing school speedily furnished scope for all his powers.

Of Dr. Coit's intellectual equipment for his task a few words may be said here, although it will naturally be disclosed everywhere in the course of this study. He had received the usual classical education of boys of his time, along with the special advantage of study under the direction of a learned father. He must have been a hard reader from the beginning. No American boy of the period could hope to get the foundation that came so easily to his brothers across the water, which developed in Arnold an idolatry for Aristotle, which put Gladstone at the feet of Homer, and made Dean Church "keep a throne apart for Lucretius." But Dr. Coit had had far more than the routine grounding in Latin and Greek, and possessed in a marked degree the divine fury of the classics. Not a critical scholar in the German sense, he was very strong on the cultural side, and, as we shall see later, his enthu-

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siasm kindled an answering flame in the minds of his immediate pupils.

In modern languages he was not strong. His French was the classic French of the "Provincial Letters," of Racine and Molière, and perhaps, of Massillon and Lacordaire. L'Abbé Constantin doubtless appealed to him, but the modern French realistic novel was in his eyes an abomination, something to be taken up carefully with a pair of tongs and tossed into the fire. As for German, it was scarcely taught in his boyhood, and, although he made sporadic attempts to study it, he virtually never knew it. His reading of German poetry or of the German theologians was in his vernacular. He was not ignorant of science and mathematics; he could and did teach the latter in early days when it was necessary to fill a master's place temporarily. Of what are called accomplishments, he once told the writer that he had none, that they did not run in his blood. And yet he played the piano well enough to enable him to take the organist's place at

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the old chapel organ occasionally. But the simple chants and hymns were very quaintly rendered, and with a staccato touch and rolling arpeggio treatment. It may be added also that he took his time in beginning each canticle, since he would allow nothing to interfere with his complete devotional surrender to the prayers and lessons. One can hardly say that he was artistic in temperament; his ethical side was almost too strong for that. The Dresden Madonna no doubt was his delight, but Rubens, with his frank animalism, was far too gross. He must find the moral and religious in anything worth admiring. Dr. Arnold went much further in this direction than Dr. Coit. It is said that none of the cathedrals of continental Europe ever evoked a word of enthusiasm from him, or stirred an emotion, with the exception of Cologne. And so of the other plastic art; Dr. Coit's Greek studies gave him a Greek feeling for poetry, but scarcely for sculpture. The writer remembers on a very hot Sunday, many years ago, when he was standing by

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Dr. Coit on the bank and watching the boys bathing, that the Doctor said rather shyly, "The human form is not beautiful, is it?" This is certainly not very Greek. Accordingly, a Madonna, a Pieta, a Moses, possibly the Apollo Belvidere, would win his indorsement; but a Venus de Milo, or a Cupid and Psyche, never in the world! In fact, he was morbidly sensitive to the suggestion of any divorce between art and ethics. With him, all impure art was bad art, and to read authors like Flaubert and De Maupassant for style, as sometimes people are recommended to do, seemed to him absurd as well as wrong; he would as soon have consorted with Satan for manners. Probably it was not art itself that appealed directly to his esthetic sensibility, but something about art which he thought ennobling and which made for culture. Raphael, Phidias, and Beethoven were names to conjure with, but they carried perhaps a little of the aroma of the famous "Du grec, O ciel!" in "Les Femmes Savantes."

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However, it would not be just to dogmatize in this matter, for there was little in this country, in the early days of St. Paul's School, to evoke the latent art-feeling of anybody. It would, indeed, be history as well as justice to say, that the arrival of Augustus Swift as a master in 1874 brought the first real contribution in the direction of the fine arts. His many esthetic gifts and aggressive joy in the employment of them operated like an April shower upon the rather arid soil of our puritan foundation. Henceforward the beautiful was to be a part of our endowment. Not that his taste was impeccable, but he loved music and painting and poetry, and lived in the atmosphere of them. And back of these tastes there was so warm and Christian a nature that his rather sensuous contribution did not strike us as altogether too Pagan. His early death was a great loss, and caused genuine grief in the hearts of all connected with St. Paul's.

From what has been said one might naturally expect to find on the school estate a

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certain evidence of indifference to artistic form, a disregard of exterior effect in the early architecture of buildings, in groupings, and in the arrangement of roads, banks and streams. Certainly, no building could claim any great beauty prior to the erection of the new Chapel in 1888. Utility had been the great consideration, and back of utility had always lain the moral and intellectual welfare of the boys. This was Dr. Coit's obsession, and everything else might well wait. Could there have been a more fortunate obsession? Could anything else have laid so strong a foundation for the great school which he was destined to create? And the years rolled on, and Dr. Coit grew with his work. Beyond all expectation came scholars from all parts of the country, and fresh scholars demanded enlarged accommodation and more instructors, until, at the death of the first Rector, the roll of the school was nearly what it is now. Three hundred and forty boys constitute, according to the ingenious mathematics of Edward Thring, both the limit and the ideal

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number of boys that can be handled in safety by one man; and our present rather homogeneous accommodations, as they suffice for this, seem happily to invite us to this as a reasonable policy.

What Dr. Coit contributed to the cause of education in the forty years devoted to St. Paul's School is, not so much a system, as a life; what is implicit in the best secondary education became explicit in him. He was not much given to organization, and like Arnold regarded the processes of education as dynamical rather than mechanical. But he gave *himself* to the full. He almost never left the place, and with difficulty could be persuaded to preach in a city pulpit. Probably his natural shrinking from publicity had much to do with this. The writer has a vague remembrance of his rushing into print at some lively moment of the Civil War in defence of Dr. Dix of Trinity Church, New York, and of his being rewarded with a volley of abuse from the local press, terminating in the words (*horribile dictu*): "Go it, Coit!"

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Such a complete absorption in his mission was not without its disabilities. A man loses much from not rubbing up against his fellows; without exchange of views, without the correctives of opposition and rebuke there is a condition of mental isolation from which he must suffer. Of course there are compensations. Some loss of time, the penalty of social intercourse, is escaped, and a habit of decision, without excessive judicial weighing, is fostered. In any event, ultimate responsibility cannot be shared. A strong man cannot uncover all his secrets, take counsel of every one; were he to do so, he might win more affection, but he would have less authority; a smug peace would prevail, but the institution would suffer. Dr. Coit was executive and cabinet combined, and he patiently bore his own burdens. But burdens they were. Without money or endowment, and without the accessories that to-day make for popularity, he gradually fashioned the great school and the great body of devoted alumni which are

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his monument. And in his great effort, he shortened his days.

If the first Rector had been willing to share with others his responsibilities, if he had made a little more use of modern aids and short-cuts, and had mingled a little more relaxation with his continuous labor, he might have served ten years longer. But, as we look at it now, it is quite conceivable that further service would not have added to the value of his work. Perhaps his contribution was fully made. He was spared the sorrowful consciousness of any decline in his powers; no one has ever said that his grip was loosening. "Felix in opportunitate mortis."

The circumstances of Dr. Coit's death have always seemed to the writer a little out of relation to his life. One would have expected that a life so full of piety, so marked by strict performance of religious duties and observances, would be followed by a death of calm serenity, featured with all the consolation of sacrament and scenes of intimate love. But it was far different. Somehow, the aus-

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tere soul, that had made, in the philosophical sense of Socrates, a death of life, did not find a great change in death itself. He simply, like Jacob, "gathered up his feet into the bed" and was gone. A short week, without suffering, without talk, without a message; that was all! The dramatic was wholly lacking. How easy it would be, after the manner of the pious mediæval annalists, to give a different turn to it all! His life lends itself easily to the myth, and one might make the wish father to the thought in constructing a legend, that one had learned from a witness that his end was something like the following: "A few minutes before he breathed his last, he opened his eyes and said in a clear, firm voice: 'I leave the administration of the place which I have loved so dearly to my brother Joseph and to my faithful helpers, in perfect confidence that they will bring to full fruition the ideals which I have so poorly and imperfectly begun.' " This was no doubt about the way he felt, but, for some reason, his lips were sealed. Surely a life of such

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self-renunciation, and such blamelessness merited well of Death, and it is a matter of real thankfulness that he escaped all that was sordid and humiliating, and could pass quickly to the other world, as one "folding his tent."

"I have been dying for years, and now I shall begin to live."

II

ADMINISTRATOR

A FORMAL history of St. Paul's School can be compiled at any time by any one who will devote himself to working over the material that may be drawn abundantly from five sources. These sources are: "Memorials of St. Paul's School" by Joseph Howland Coit, D.D.; "An Account of St. Paul's School," by James M. Lamberton; "Memories of a Great School-Master," by James P. Conover; the "Horae Scholasticae" in forty-eight volumes; and finally, the "Rural Record," a diary of daily events, which has been kept with considerable minuteness by one and another recorder from the earliest days of the school. It seems to the writer that such a history, except for its encyclopedic value, would answer no popular appeal, and is scarcely called for as yet. The cur-

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rent events of school life are, at best, of parochial interest only, and may be found at need in the several records mentioned above. In an unusual degree the life of Dr. Coit is the history of the school. To few men is it given to lay the foundation and prescribe the regulations of an institution, and then to administer these regulations for the first forty years. It is like the inventor of the aeroplane, first planning his machine, and then, with full knowledge of each screw and rivet, trying it out by frequent and continuous use. In both cases the handling is the vital point.

It has already been intimated that Dr. Coit was no innovator; his theory of secular education was not materially different from that which prevailed generally in the New England of his day. He felt that educational training rested on few and simple principles. In his system Diligence and Duty covered pretty much all that was necessary on the boy's part, while, on the teacher's part, sound knowledge, with the will and capacity to impart it, constituted the whole equipment.

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Fortunately for his temperament the modern passion for analysis and organization had not begun to get in its perfect work. Books on pedagogy probably bored him, as they did both the Arnolds. He was willing to spend himself and all who served under him to the full, provided the ideal that he set before himself was furthered thereby; if the engine was running smoothly, he did not worry much over the expenditure of fuel. The consequent unscientific waste was God's affair. What he would have made out of the modern Gospel of Efficiency, we can only surmise. Some one has said that every man is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian. The explanation of Dr. Coit lies in the fact that he had a consuming sense of the value of the human soul; every other consideration was subordinate to this. Organization and material improvements at the school were but means. Though systematic in his personal habits, he was perhaps a little too scornful of system in education. His own gifts as an educator were so remarkable that he may easily have

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forgotten the value of system to the less gifted. Good organization makes for economy of moral effort; and moral force, while unquestionably the noblest of endowments, is comparatively rare. It might, therefore, be said, with some truth, that St. Paul's School of the first forty years was a place unscientifically organized but splendidly administered. Buildings were put up when needed, and paid for out of gifts and savings which rightfully belonged either to masters' salaries or proper hygienic accessories. No great attention was given to any future development of the premises as related to these buildings. The new chapel should be beautiful as becomes the House of God, but the main thing would always be what went on within it. A new infirmary came in due time, but Dr. Coit's mind was concentrated upon the moral and professional qualifications of the doctor and nurses rather than upon the arrangement of rooms, fireplaces, baths, absence of germ-harboring corners, and all that modern science deems essential.

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Sickness, he thought, came from God, or, at least, was permitted by God, and he had perhaps more confidence in prayer than in the doctor. It is doubtful whether he thought any one could catch cold in Chapel if he was truly devout. Such a flaming faith as this implies will bring a smile to sophisticated lips, but it is scarcely an exaggerated statement, and it explains the man.

He would not have rejected the implications of, what H. G. Wells calls, "that blessed word Efficiency," if he were allowed to define it. But he would have insisted that the two terms of the problem should be properly articulated, that there was such a thing as a proper waste of force as well as a proper economy, that things spiritual are not to be handled like things material. For instance, he regarded time as a trust not to be squandered, but he would cheerfully surrender his precious hours, hours that other educators husband for study or devote to outside propagandism, to work over individual boys. Always in his Study, he never denied him-

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self to any one, boy or master, that needed help or advice. And yet he was a man who loved a book with a rare passion; but duty and love were still stronger passions. No sacrifice on his part was too great, if one boy could be saved. This is certainly not sound Efficiency doctrine.

He probably would have made merry — and he had a dangerous talent for irony — over the word Efficiency, and would have poked fun at those who make a fetish of it. He might have asked seriously whether there was not a danger of destroying the very things that make life worth living, when one regards the amount of product as the chief measure of success, and makes the laborer, whether with the hand or head, a mere machine or formula. The quality of the product was to be considered along with the amount, and was of far greater value. Dr. Coit was never ambitious for a large school, but he was extremely anxious that St. Paul's should be a good school; the school grew simply because it was a good school. Specious suc-

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cesses, such as prominence in athletics, commendation in the Press, social importance, big gatherings and speeches, did not appeal to him. He knew what kind of a foundation it was wise to lay, if the institution was to endure, and his wisdom has been amply justified. The doctrine of Efficiency, in its zeal for practical results, may easily overlook something; in fact, it has no scales in which to weigh things spiritual. Test some great historical events by the law of efficiency, efficiency meaning "effectual agency." Would any one have said beforehand that the Reformation or the French Revolution, with their waste of blood and treasure, with their toll of sorrow and suffering, would be in the line of Efficiency? And yet the principles of religious and political freedom had to come, and the resultant blessings are worth it all. A plausible case may be made out for the statement that the introduction of Christianity by inculcating the virtues of submission and humility, by its transference of happiness to the world to come, checked

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for 1500 years the development of material civilization for which the Greeks from Aristotle down had in numberless ways furnished the preliminary studies. And yet no material progress could have compensated the absence of the spiritual and ethical forces that have glorified modern times. The real efficiency had a different goal. Take the Incarnation itself. The consistent worshipper at the shrine of Efficiency must have long since observed the lack of proportion between the sacrifice of the Son of God, the infinite one, and the salvation of the human race. And yet the mystery of it all does not preclude our belief in its necessity and beneficence. The emancipation of the American negro was not a measure of economic efficiency, but no one is much troubled over that redoubtable fact.

The above reflections are made, not with the idea of proving anything, but simply to illustrate the fact that moral ideals are *sui generis* and carry their own sanctions with them. And so our first Rector, although he

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did not leave a school bristling with up-to-date ideas, did something far more potential; he left a subtle moral deposit in the hearts of 3,000 young Americans, which has already made its mark upon our country.

No attempt will be made here to expound the system of St. Paul's School; there is nothing specific about it; least of all is there anything markedly English. Naturally, the modern scientific spirit, which has laid its hand on every human question, has modified the original scheme. We are no longer under the spell of a passion which led Dr. Coit to write in lead-pencil on the fly-leaf of the first volume of the "Rural Record" St. Augustine's words, "*Jube quod vis, meus Deus, et da quod jubes;*" 'Command what Thou wilt, my God, and grant what Thou commandest.' This is the whole system of St. Paul's." But the quotation is interesting as showing the motives that lay at the base of customs and regulations which made St. Paul's a little different from other schools. Without enlarging upon these details we shall confine

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ourselves to pointing out Dr. Coit's attitude towards a few of the prominent questions that confront educators.

In the matter of athletics he was Athenian rather than Spartan. A rigid subordination of sport to study was obviously an elementary principle with a man who regarded the body as something to be kept under, as something which had to be tolerated as a necessary but temporary clog upon the soul. And yet in practice, he was friendly to all measures that conduced to healthy athleticism among the boys. He had a keen appreciation of the moral value of sport, even though its roughness and pagan frankness were somewhat foreign to his puritan reserve. Personally, he had no athletic gifts or tastes; one can scarcely imagine him in the act of running, or of tossing a ball; no one had ever seen him with his coat off. A modern foot-ball game, with its stadium accessories of roar and blood, would have been placed by him in the category of things appropriate to Dante's *Inferno*. His presence on our playing-

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fields during great contests was an obligation of his office, but his interest was academic; no doubt he was glad when the gong sounded and no one was killed. And yet how kindly and courteously he welcomed the boys at the Rectory at the traditional suppers after the annual boat-races, with tactful recognition of success, and with considerable knowledge of individual prowess. He never failed in such duties. Perhaps nothing was really irksome to him when it came in the line of duty and furthered the end he had at heart. And he was too wise not to see that modern athletic sports have achieved in a wholesome and appealing way for the masses what the entire scheme of Christian ethics had achieved for the elect only, namely, a growing respect for the sanctities of the human body. He would have been the last to refuse the co-operation of a moral agency that teaches the humblest newsboy the connection between temperance and the success of his hero of the National League.

But he was too jealous of the ultimate

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religious sanctions of virtue, such as are inculcated by the Beatitudes, to be willing to shift from his own shoulders the burden of personal responsibility for the lives of his own boys. Anything approaching the current fad of teaching sex-hygiene to the young in classes wholesale was absolutely foreign to his conception of the philosophy of education. He would not have scoffed at mere prudential chastity, but he was convinced that it presented no sure defence against the arguments of the flesh, if the religious motive was absent. He had a very keen scent for the presence of what was low and vile in the mind of a boy, and he never shrank from the delicate duty of personal guidance and instruction. In fact, his own aggressive purity was contagious. But, both in his sermons and in his wonderful Thursday night talks, his instinct led him, if he had occasion to touch upon this delicate subject, to dwell rather upon the beauty and joy of the clean life, and thus to aim at accomplishing by indirection what other educators of less imagination

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try to accomplish by the aid of a physician. He knew that a sense of right and wrong is implanted in every human being, that the youngest child is under no real illusions about fundamentals; and he was willing to risk a few failures, under the generous aspiration that the great majority might enjoy a comparatively innocent adolescence and be spared the sorrowful sense that the whole world is hopelessly prone to sin. He felt that the Christian religion, backed by home influences and the manly compulsions of physical sports, is all that is necessary for the proper training of the young. And he would not admit that the change from school to college involved any fresh point of view or any new rules. Anywhere and everywhere, it was the human soul that was at stake, and, although the boy should be warned against the peculiar temptations of college life, Dr. Coit always prescribed to him, as the only unfailing guarantee of winning out, the strict observance of his religious duties, the habit of never intermitting prayer, Bible-reading,

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and one service, at least, in Church on Sundays. Doubtless, his advice in numberless instances was not followed, but many who read this will inwardly confess that even the advice was bracing. The writer remembers the case of an old boy, over fifty years of age, who asseverated to him that he had never failed to read a few verses of the Bible at night, even under the most unfavorable circumstances, and once when he was so muddled with alcohol that he scarcely knew what he was doing; and he did not himself regard this performance as hypocrisy, but rather as prompted by an intuition akin to that which impels a drowning man to grasp at anything that offers. It is needless to add that many an alumnus, who conspicuously failed to live up to these ideals, was deterred from visiting his old school out of sheer unwillingness to face the Doctor's scrutinizing eye.

The school-historian of twenty-five years hence will probably characterize the present moment as a period of transition, when St. Paul's was gradually passing from paternal

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to institutional government. He will recognize that a sufficient number of the older masters, "wedded to their idols," remained in their places long enough to obstruct a too rapid change of methods. He will then proceed to comment upon the eternal strife between the conservative and the radical temper, and the steady and sober gain to civilization resulting from their painful collisions. But he will be complacent over the changed conditions, and will fortify his contention by remarking that under no circumstances can Progress stay her hand, that the past must give place to the present; and, if he is disposed to illustrate, he will take the city of Rome to task for clinging to her ruins, alleging that hygiene demands the removal of rubbish. He will aver that no sane public opinion can tolerate the retention of medieval fever-ridden districts in order that a few tourists may dream morbidly over rotting beauty. Or, in accepting meekly the final disappearance of the classic tongues from our school curriculum, he will applaud the words of

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Emile Faguet à propos of the neglect of the French vernacular: "*Vous n'allez pas interrompre le cours de la civilisation pour ramener les hommes à l'étude de la langue française.*" Finally, he will note the survival of a number of forms and usages, some quite stripped of meaning, that alone mark the fiery trail of the first Rector.

But while we are still of the present moment, while we are part of the process of transformation from a one-man school to an institution, and are still partially under the spell of the past, let us fix certain points of school history.

The early days of St. Paul's could scarcely be other than paternal in administration. Dr. Coit had a free field; St. Paul's was all aim and no means. And for better or worse, the dominating character of Dr. Coit, with its prevailing note of conviction and impeccability, was to have the fashioning of it. This autocratic quality in the personality of Dr. Coit, with all that it implies, has always been a thorny question in the minds

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of those who otherwise would rank him among the saints. It is obvious that no analysis, no generous interpretation, can ever make the exhibitions of imperious will anything but unlovely spectacles; such exhibitions may even be wholesome, but they are not strictly graces of character. Most people are offended by them. And yet there are two kinds of will, the will of a Napoleon and the will of a St. Francis, the will of self and of ambition, and the will that has its roots in moral conviction. They usually deal with different questions, and there is little doubt as to which is the stronger. Dr. Coit was like a wall, if a principle was involved; and naturally parents and masters, not to mention boys, were occasionally wounded, and sometimes alienated. But there was nothing studied or conscious in the dominating manner of Dr. Coit, nor did it appear in petty ways or devious methods. Consequently it was overlooked or forgiven for the sake of the large and generous qualities that lay behind. Had his autocratic will extended to little tyrannies

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he never would have held the body of strong men that he gradually gathered about him. Moreover, a certain attitude of assured conviction is one thing in the conduct of the unequipped and inexperienced, and quite another in that of him who has been ripened by time and training; Dr. Coit was remarkably sure in his judgments and intuitions. His decisions were warped neither by vanity nor by ambition in the ordinary sense, and his unselfish disinterestedness is sufficiently attested by the fact that, after forty years' control of the school finances, he had never been able to reconcile it with his conscience to lay by a dollar out of the School's income. He died without property of any sort. This will not be regarded by the world as the mark of prudence; but it was characteristic of the man absorbed in his mission, part mystic, part monk and part stoic. And this temperamental indifference to worldly success and to the satisfactions that most men prize may have unconsciously fed a sense of superiority over men less eman-

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cipated from the body than he. It is inevitable that one who had no taste for the conventional dissipations of life, who had never been inside a theatre, who could hardly, when dying, be induced to take a spoonful of stimulant, who never seemed to require the most innocent relaxation of body, and whose daily life had been, to the best of our knowledge, conformable to these austere standards,—it is inevitable that such a one should be conscious of a plane of living somewhat higher than that of the average man. If this is self-righteousness, it is certainly venial. Dr. Coit once remarked to the writer that no man over twenty-five was justified in eating or drinking anything that might disagree with him. He also said that any Christian man ought to be able to read a poem like “Venus and Adonis” without an emotional ripple. The notable thing about this last remark is that he should have found Shakespeare’s famous poem a classic instance of salaciousness.

It is probable, therefore, that this habitual

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appeal to so lofty a standard, a standard which he by no means exacted of his boys, gave him an air of superiority, which perhaps only veiled the reserved and humble follower of Jesus Christ. And in quitting this subject, it may be added that really valid and unsophisticated characters were not very much disturbed by his manner; perhaps at bottom it was only "amour propre" that suffered. It is an open question whether "amour propre" is not the cause of most of the quarrels and misunderstandings that have marked the world's history.

Dr. Coit's chief weapon in dealing with boys was persuasion. Rules and penalties were necessary, but, if possible, were to be anticipated. Dr. Arnold had said that in ruling a great school the "first thing is 'words,' the second thing is 'words,' and the third thing is 'words.'"

Without doubt, back of the "words" there was implied punishment, and, if necessary, expulsion.

The historic Thursday Evening Talks, sometimes called Dr. Coit's Lectures, devel-

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oped gradually out of his need of getting in touch with the boys on all burning topics of school life. He had a singular power of winning them over to his own point of view, and, in the process, he made use of all his gifts of speech, running the gamut from the most serious note down to the ironical and humorous. The merely facetious found no place in his rhetoric. The writer never heard him make a pun, though he could enjoy one even when with mock gravity he reproved the perpetrator. Of real humor he had full store, and his sense of the incongruous saved him from many a blunder that dogs the fate of the best of men. This sense of humor, combined with the taste which was the reward of his cultural studies in the Humanities, was a sure bulwark against the crudities of educational theories. He instinctively shrank from a new panacea or short-cut; hard work in his opinion could alone make the scholar or the saint. And diligent work was a duty, not to be coaxed by too many rewards. Prizes were few, and

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were, therefore, greatly desiderated. The school medal, in his day, was a precious possession; and events have proved that few mistakes were made in the bestowal of it. Perhaps it may be thought wise some day to abandon this prize, which causes heart-burnings and which, as virtually denominating the finest boy in VI Form, cannot logically be given to any boy who works for it and deems himself worthy of it. And yet the long line of worthy holders of the medal would seem to belie any such misgivings, and it would probably be a mistake to interrupt a succession that connotes so noble an ideal.

The attitude of the first Rector towards the Sixth Form was certainly not that of a Head Master of Eton or Rugby. Perhaps it was not a wise attitude, but he had no leaning towards government by Prefects. Worthy and responsible members of the Sixth Form he always took into his confidence and used as ancillary forces in the school republic. But he was suspicious of

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the immaturity of youth under twenty, and he felt that his younger pupils were confided to his care with the implicit understanding that they were to be guided and influenced by masters who should be men of proved character and experience. Moreover, we fancy that he distrusted anything mediate in his own influence; he desired to have nothing between himself and the boys. Finally, he was not sure that the position of prefect was quite wholesome. Was it not possible that, although the system saved labor for masters, and promoted an exterior order, it was a strain on character and had a tendency to make prigs? It certainly is not altogether American. The Sixth Form in his day never had much organization, and, being distributed in various houses, did not bulk very large in the eyes of the rest of the school. Unquestionably, there is room for a very different point of view here, and we are inclined to suspect that Dr. Coit could not tolerate any prominence that militated in the least against his own supremacy. "In

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statu pupillari” and “In loco parentis” were living phrases with him, and he was not disposed to regard even his oldest boys as anything but boys. And for this reason he was jealous of any encroachment of the college spirit upon the simple habitudes of the school life. Exchange of civilities and interscholastic sports were not to be thought of. Hence our wholesome system of home athletics, with the minimum of perfervid excitement and the maximum of real enjoyment, and one might in fairness add, with the loss of perfect attainment which such isolation would entail. There was to be no preferred college; no great school could properly be a feeder for any one institution. Not that he had no preference nor ever showed it. He was in reality deeply prejudiced, and, notwithstanding his imposed prudence, he occasionally allowed criticisms to escape him that were resented in quarters that need not be named. As a Trustee of Trinity College he would naturally have been pleased to see his boys enter that excellent home of learn-

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ing; but he used no undue influence, realizing that parents had the decision, and that boys usually follow their fathers' footsteps in the path of knowledge.

Of the use of influence, which is the teacher's prerogative and business, Dr. Coit was extremely conscientious. He knew that boys are born hero-worshippers and too readily catch the tone of their environment. With their limitations in view he treated them with great respect. "*Maxima debetur puero reverentia.*" He felt the responsibility of the right or wrong word at the critical moment. And so he uttered words of encouragement as often as those of rebuke. It was rather characteristic of him to use both at the same time. Could not many an alumnus conjure up in memory a specific scene to illustrate this generalization — how, after being summoned to the Doctor's study, how, after being reduced to pulp and rendered thoroughly contrite, he was sent off by a few words of affectionate appreciation in a glow of determination to do better?

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Indeed, Dr. Coit held it for a principle never to let a boy, if it could be helped, leave his presence in a rebellious spirit, somewhat as Jacob, wrestling with the Angel, would not let go his hold until the Angel had blessed him. A recent writer in the *Century Magazine* has said that "It is perhaps the final test of a gentleman,—his attitude toward children." Without pressing too far this aphorism, we may remark that there is certainly a "juste milieu" between the severe neglect or intolerable condescension shown by our forefathers towards the young and the affected air of equality that prevails to-day, and that his attitude will always mark the manner of the instructed adult. A boy does not even desire to be treated like an equal, but he does covet serious attention, and, in most cases, responds quickly to sympathetic encouragement. He likes to feel that his efforts are noticed. Dr. Coit never seemed to lose an opportunity of commending discreetly a boy who was showing progress in work or conduct, and more than frequently

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marked his approbation, and sometimes his disapprobation, by the gift of some wisely selected book. This was one of his unconsciously happy devices, and we doubt not that there are scores of these books at the present moment resting on the shelves of their grateful possessors. If present-day school-masters are not aware of the stimulus exerted by such practical expressions of approval and regard, they had better begin the experience. The "*largesse*" is, indeed, a legitimate instrument in education, a blessing to him that gives as well as to him that takes. To the boy it seems quite natural that a person who has such plenary powers in all vital matters should be also the dispenser of good things; and in his generous imputation of all virtues to his master, he finds it easy to impute riches to him also.

And this temperamental interest on the part of Dr. Coit in the welfare of the boys was scarcely more noticeable than his attachment to the masters. They were his friends, and once landed at St. Paul's School, and

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squarely identified with it, unless they had failed to make good, there was no thought of a separation; they were part of the work. It is true that he held them up to a high standard, but there was no nagging, and they had full chance to succeed or fail. The school-master's lot is not always a happy one, and his art is not always easy to learn. Sometimes in a certain bitterness of soul, when smarting from the rebuffs with which vulgar and robust natures, whether in boys or men, repay gentle handling, he is tempted to think that one cannot be at once a successful school-master and a gentleman. But, fortunately, such moods are evanescent, and to the truly discerning school-master there can be no manner of doubt as to the value of breeding as an asset in the equipment of the perfect educator. Dr. Coit may be said to have settled the question.

“Nature never rhymes her children,” and we are not likely to duplicate him in this country nor an Arnold in England; such men are the product of their epochs and meet

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certain needs. A weak copyist would be fatal. Dr. Coit would be a dangerous man to imitate. What was real would be shoddy in a less genuine person; his gentleness would be effeminacy; his dignity, pomposity; his piety, hypocrisy; his autocracy, an effective working policy; his spiritual elevation, a pretence; his moral domination, a tyranny; his graciousness, patronizing condescension; his delicate probing of the conscience, an abuse of the confessional; his playful irony, a calculated weapon. If the first Rector could be translated in such terms, the work wrought by him would have long since proved a Frankenstein, taking vengeance on his creator and then disappearing like all unrealities.

And how have his boys fared in the business of life? This is a question that cannot be answered with precision, but a glance at the quality of the men that find themselves united at our large Alumni gatherings should reassure the sceptics. All professions and callings are represented, and the failures are conspicuously few. Sixty clergymen and

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seven bishops testify to the subtle though never compelling influence of the religious school of the first forty years. A notable body of lawyers, physicians, novelists, historians, and publicists, illustrate the intellectual impulse. Hosts of others bear in their sober lives the stamp of their training under Dr. Coit. As far as we are aware, none of his boys have been in prison or in an asylum; this may sound like a strange statement, but it has a meaning in these days of lawlessness and neurasthenia. He did not leave a perfectly organized institution, but he left it free from debt, and with a foundation, the stronger for being purely moral, on which his successors could build as time and circumstance should demand. Froude says, on the last page of his *History of England*: "The worst legacy which princes or statesmen could bequeath to their country would be the resolution of all its perplexities, the establishment once and forever of a finished system, which would neither require nor tolerate improvement."

III

TEACHER

DR. ARNOLD, in a letter to an old boy, has said: "I call by the name of wisdom, knowledge rich and varied, digested and combined, and pervaded through and through by the light of the spirit of God." Nothing better could describe Dr. Coit's ideal. It is the wisdom of the ages that he revered, not the facts from which it is garnered nor any particular method of acquisition. He had no especial predilection for a book as such; no particular edition, no choice binding aroused any great enthusiasm. Life was too short and too serious for such irrelevancies. Hall Harrison handled a book as a young father handles his first baby; a book was a book and therefore precious. The only book that Dr. Coit treated with idolatry was the Bible; it had its place apart, and no other book was suffered to rest on top of it. Many bibles

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there were and much theology in his personal library, which was large and constantly augmented regardless of expense, and the secular side was not neglected. Doubtless the range in literature was conditioned somewhat by the demands of his profession, for he made great use of his reading, in class and out of it. Those of us who had the privilege of reading the Greek and Latin classics under him owe him more than we are wont to admit for the first dawn of real interest in general literature. The phrase, "inspiring teacher," has become a familiar common-place, but it can very properly be applied to Dr. Coit. Not satisfied with securing an exact knowledge of text, grammar and allusions, he freshened the time-worn subject matter by constant reference and illustration both in the classic tongues and in the vernacular. There are not many of the Alumni who can revert to the meridian charm of the first Rector's teaching and corroborate the writer's impressions; yet there are some who may recall, as if it were their

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first initiation into the magic of words, the quotations that follow. The writer, in his Upper Sixth Form year, read the Eclogues, Georgics and every word of Horace with Dr. Coit. There were but two in the class, and, alas! one, Henry Skelton Carter, is now gone. Under such informal conditions, the teacher had a free hand. How well the writer remembers the various tomes — at that date regarded with awe — that were brought down from their shelves in the Doctor's Study, and pillaged of their beauties for our inspiration. The music of these lines, even after forty years, still echoes in the mind.

From Shelley:

“Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains;
From cloud and from crag
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.”

From Pope:

“Yet e'en in death Eurydice he sung,
Eurydice still trembled on his tongue;
Eurydice the woods,
Eurydice the floods,
Eurydice the rocks and hollow mountains rung.”

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From Milton:

“Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd’s trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade
Or with the tangles of Neaera’s hair?”

Milton was after his own heart, though he probably placed Dante higher as a poet. His theological bias and his breadth of reading made him tolerant of the concrete mysteries of Dante, but his Puritan reserve found more congenial food in the restrained tropes of Milton. He would read aloud with manifest joy such passages as the following, and with full classic feeling for the sorcery of the proper names.

“As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the iles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend.”

or from *Paradise Regained*:

“See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato’s retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbl’d notes the summer long;

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There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream."

From Wordsworth:

"In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretched
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
With music lulled his indolent repose:
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breast was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched,
Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.
The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye
Up towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:

"And hence a beaming Goddess with her Nymphs
Across the lawn and through the darksome grove,
Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
By echo multiplied from rock or cave,
Swept in the storm of chase."

Or else some fragments that linger in the
memory, and are yet too trifling to claim an
author:

"Call me Daphne, call me Doris,
Call me Lalage or Chloris,
Only, only call me thine."

"And still 't is Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
And Venus who brings every thing that's fair."

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The atmosphere of these quotations is not scientific, but it had its value, and bred scholars. Yet, it must not be inferred that such was the main staple of Dr. Coit's method in teaching the classics. He was most exacting in regard to the mastery of every linguistic detail in the book, whether prose or verse, that was being studied. Every day's lesson was to be learned, and no boy ventured to come to his class unprepared, or half-prepared. Dr. Coit insisted on hard work as the only basis of sound learning; the responsibility rested on the boy, and good teaching could do little more than guide and inspire. He had no leaning toward the analytic methods which are much in vogue to-day, and preferred to store boys' minds with many fine passages in literature rather than to dissect a few of them, realizing that memory is the precious possession of youth and that excessive analysis is a bore. He knew that a boy craves certitude, and that his attention flags if balanced alternatives are presented to him in place of

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categorical statements. Hence he undoubtedly made some unqualified assertions in literary matters which our later reading has not quite confirmed, but for which we are none the worse off. He did not wish his opinions challenged, and we remember very vividly the lofty way in which he would wave off any boy who ventured to cite a dictionary as counter-authority to his own translation or pronunciation. He was by no means impeccable in his English; this is no unusual thing with fine scholars, and comes often from early home associations. No one could explain his habitual use of the colloquialism, "Was you there?", but no one cared to correct him. Possibly he was aware that this was fair usage in the later Eighteenth Century, but he would not have worried over the necessity or propriety of any defence; his speech no more than his act was a debatable question. It may be said that his language in general was slightly Euphuistic, though the habit was unconscious and temperamental. When he broke

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his leg, it was not pain but "anguish" that he suffered. Things were "reassuring," not "encouraging"; other things were "all very poor," when the ordinary person would have found more expressive language. "Servants" were "domestics." Such a tendency in the use of speech as we are noting will be attributed by some people to the inevitable emergence of the pedagogic manner, to the difficulty of descending from the pedestal where circumstances placed him. However, it did not appear at all in any public utterances, such as his sermons, in the preparation of which, it may be added, he had a little of the Port Royal notion that excessive conscious elaboration was incompatible with the collaboration of God.

His vocabulary was rich, and the apt word rarely failed him. This came naturally to one who dwelt habitually in the company of the great writers of the past, and to whom translation was a daily habitude. The English Bible, his Greek Testament, and the classic poets, — these were his preferred

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friends. And it was these that he held up to his boys as models. Notable passages were to be committed to memory, which would serve, not only as models, like the masterpieces of the fine arts and industrial arts, for authority and imitation, but still more as fountains of emotional power. He laid great stress in general on the utility of memorizing famous words; they were the abiding possession of a life-time. And then he was a fine translator, giving to the English rendering of Homer and Virgil a swing, with a diction at once literal and equivalent, that readily invited the ambitious to imitation; we used to think the phrases fell from his lips into iambic pentameters fit for the printer. The classics were so much a part of his intellectual baggage, and were so real to him, that he made us share in his enthusiasm. And yet the reality was that of the idealist. He could be pleased that Third Formers under the supervision of John T. Wheeler should set themselves to constructing a model of Cæsar's bridge, with minute

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attention to the Latin text, but the veritable structure had no meaning for him as a mechanical product of the first century before Christ; it was interesting because associated with the name of the celebrated Roman. As for making the bridge himself, it is doubtful whether he could have prudently essayed to drive a nail. Then, again, he would gravely accept such a statement as that Hannibal used vinegar to melt the rocks lying in his way over the passes of the Alps; for the word, was it not "acetum," and was not "acetum" a Latin word, and was not the assertion found in Livy? That was enough to quiet any latent scepticism.

Indeed, his entire knowledge of the past was deeply colored by his imagination. His acquaintance with the city of Rome was intimate and accurate, but it was the Rome of Long's Classical Atlas. In 1868, he had an opportunity of realizing his dreams, and verifying his impressions, but he spent only ten days in the imperial city, and, as far as one can remember, he never had much to say

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about the experience. Probably, he was disappointed; it was not what it was reputed to be. Certainly, he would have been shy of the Papacy, and Medievalism uncovered would have been sordid enough. And as to the Rome of the Cæsars and the Roman poets, the pages of whose works he had so lovingly fingered, could he have met Horace on the Via Sacra, we are sure that he would have snubbed him as a "soulless Epicurean."

So also with the Holy Land, which perhaps fortunately he did not visit. He was never tired of expatiating on the peaceful reaches of the hills of Galilee, on the beauty of the lake of Gennesaret, on Bethlehem and on Olivet; but these places were the magic names of his New Testament. The barren wastes of Judæa and the dirty oriental towns might have disquieted [him unspeakably. He would have harked back to his Bible and have been pained at the difficulty of articulating his visions with the dry realities.

As might be expected, Dr. Coit was no

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more fond of specific methods in his teaching than in his administration; in his view, the way to master a subject was to master it. If the subject were Latin, the grammar was to be drilled into the boy with store of rules committed to memory, and then the approved writers were to be read in large volume and in no choppy manner. Examinations were useful, and considerable emphasis was laid on the oral as well as the written. He appreciated the moral value of an exercise that trained a boy to stand up and give "a reason for the faith that is in him with meekness and fear." Marks also were necessary, but they did not necessarily indicate a boy's complete achievement. The doctrine of the finality of percentages did not impress him greatly; nor was he eager to make such statistics the measure of a master's success. In his day a master might be successful without even knowing it. Much work and reading was done outside the curriculum, and enthusiasts were known to steal from the jealous domain of sleep a few precious hours

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and in company with the equally zealous master, to

“let their lamps, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower.”

The Upper School of the present day is not often the scene of any scandals of this kind, for the esteemed principles of hygienics and athletics equally forbid such a strain on efficiency. But thirty years ago, less attention was paid to the body, and a boy might spend his spare time in the Library without having his temperature taken; he might even have a literary hobby without being a “freak”; perhaps know his daily lesson without being regarded as a “shark.” A little unclassified information was not thought harmful. On the contrary, it was esteemed an asset. Voltaire has a pregnant phrase: “*Le superflu, chose très nécessaire.*” May we not, in the last analysis, regard the fine flavor of Dr. Coit’s training and influence as the bit of superfluity which has created a type of its own, and which, in so doing, has added a valuable note to the educational processes

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that turn out our happy and wholesome body of American youth?

St. Paul's School, at no period of its history, could measure up, perhaps, to Carlyle's description of Rugby in Arnold's time as the "Temple of industrious peace." But industry was, certainly, one of the marks of the place during its early decades, and Dr. Coit's boys, even if all were not scholars, had a serious attitude towards culture. Judged by pragmatic standards, his dream of "pouring wisdom into the minds of boys who are incapable of receiving it" has not wholly failed. After fifty years, and especially among his pupils of fifty years of age and over, the mark of the old-fashioned scholarship is notably conspicuous. It would be glory enough to have set in motion half-a-dozen men of the calibre of Marion Crawford, Owen Wister and William Roscoe Thayer, the brilliant author of "Cavour"; but these names do not exhaust the list. Nor would any list, however inclusive, take account of the still larger number of Alumni who, whether in

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business or in the professions, not a few being teachers, owe their love of things intellectual and spiritual to fruitful days spent at the cloistered school among the hills of New Hampshire.

Perhaps this would be the proper place in an appreciation of Pauline contributions to education to extend a little the range of credit and to associate four or five other names with that of the subject of this study. For, although it is just to credit Dr. Coit with the major streams of influence, even in intellectual matters, it would not be true to say that he had a monopoly of the teaching function. It has always seemed to the writer that the arrival, in 1865, as masters at the school, of Joseph Howland Coit and Hall Harrison, marked an epoch. They brought a breadth of culture and a training somewhat different from that which obtained at the time, and their presence was at once felt. Mathematics and Letters — for it was in general literature rather than in Greek that Mr. Harrison made his contri-

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bution — immediately received an impulse. Dr. Joseph Coit was a rare teacher of mathematics, of great competence and of ample knowledge. Two years in the laboratories of Paris had qualified him in chemistry and physics also, though there was little room at the St. Paul's of 1865 for expansion in the direction of the physical sciences. But it stood for something to have among the masters a man who was abreast of the rising questions of the day in the scientific world, and the boys appreciated the fact then as, if alive, they appreciate it to-day. This is not the place to dwell at length upon the rôle that Dr. Joseph Coit played in the history of St. Paul's School during his long service; suffice it to say that in very many ways he was the peer of the first Rector, but lacked perhaps the touch of genius which makes a man great, and without which no one ever is great.

Here, also, we should record the long and devoted service of Dr. J. Milnor Coit, the younger brother of the first two rectors. A

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layman and man of business, he was drawn rather accidentally, like many others, into the activities of St. Paul's and for thirty years occupied a very prominent place in her councils. Though he will be remembered chiefly for his devotion to the Infirmary and for his unfailing kindness to the sick and convalescent, yet his contribution to the expanding interests of the school was notable and varied. The Scientific side of our curriculum was greatly developed by his zeal, and the present laboratory with its admirable equipment is largely his work. In general, his great energy, freely expended in every emergency, was always an element of strength to the place, and as Vice-Rector and Acting Rector at a critical period in the history of St. Paul's, he measured up to his task in a manner that will not be forgotten.

Mr. Augustus Muhlenberg Swift has already been mentioned as one of the early masters who made a distinct contribution to the more imaginative and esthetic side of the St. Paul's tradition. And, to include one fur-

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ther name, as representing a still existing influence, we are sure we have the full approbation of the Alumni, when we say that the school owes a debt to Mr. Charles Sigourney Knox, who during forty-two years has stood for the highest standard of attainment, and the pressure of whose exact scholarship has been bracing to all who have come into relations with him. But we must resist the temptation to wander from our subject and enlarge upon several other men who have been the spiritual benefactors of St. Paul's.

It is a happy thing when the mature judgment of later years confirms the generous enthusiasms of youth. A man is often fortunate if he can wholly endorse his pronouncements of the preceding lustrum. But in the case of Dr. Coit the years have brought no serious disillusion, and the writer not only has no inclination to modify his warm eulogies pronounced at the time of Dr. Coit's death, but in general has no apologies to make for still being only a slightly chastened "*laudator temporis acti*." The good old times

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still seem good. Doubtless, there is, in his mental picture, a trace of the glamour that time is fond of lending to everything in the past. Perhaps, too, although the central figure remains about the same, the setting has changed a little. A careful study of the catalogues of early days does not quite confirm his impressions as to the quality of the boy found at the school in those days. The material can hardly be called better than that of to-day; there was much that was commonplace. On the whole, the general level both of intelligence and character is probably higher at the present time. The cause is not altogether easy to state, but the increase in wealth and the consequent freedom from the grinding cares of life has undoubtedly bred a race somewhat gentler and more polished, in a superficial sense, than that which existed in the times of the Civil War. Fathers have more time to give to their boys, and the intimacy thus engendered would seem to be wholly good. Finally, the reactions of school and college life cannot

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but tend to the uplift of the general intelligence. Before the war a college education was by no means the accepted thing that it is now; fine boarding-schools were scarcely to be found, and the poor ones were a menace. Now, good secondary schools are numerous, and they seem to challenge one another in generous rivalry for the best things in mind, manners and morals.

What changes are in store for St. Paul's School in the matter of curriculum cannot be foreseen. She can hardly fail to share measurably in the movement that would substitute the so-called practical studies for the Humanities. Dr. Coit, at the time of his death, twenty years ago, would not even listen to propositions involving any assault upon the sovereignty of the classic tongues. His historic and religious instincts, as well as his sense of mental values, impelled him to subscribe with enthusiasm to the doctrine contained in these prophetic words of warning from Thomas Arnold: "Expel Greek and Latin from your schools and you confine the

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views of the existing generation to themselves and their immediate predecessors; you will cut off so many centuries of the world's experience, and place us in the same state as if the human race had first come into existence in the year 1500." But, although such were Dr. Coit's convictions and aspirations, he was too wise to attempt to fasten them as a binding creed upon the future of the school; he was only concerned to do the work in hand as he understood it. The working out of his plans, educational, as well as religious, he left with fanatical faith in the hands of God. As he said passionately at the close of one of his chapel sermons: "Shall we give up the ideal we have had before us, or lower and shape it to suit a self-willed, faithless and superficial age? Ah, no, never, by the help of God, never! This place belongs to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is and shall be its true Light and King." With its religious side safeguarded, he concerned himself very little about the destiny of minor developments of the

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school over which no control on his part was possible.

The mould in which St. Paul's was cast is of no benumbing rigidity; and expansion, when necessary and wise, will meet no fatuous obstacles; she has never been out of touch with the realities. And no one need ever cite as applying to her the dictum of one of her most gifted sons: "The conflict between dead forms and living needs is the tragedy of Institutions."

IV PASTOR

“How very hard it is to be
A Christian! Hard for you and me.”

— BROWNING

IT is a hard thing to be a Christian. This very trite observation has been labored in many tongues and under manifold metaphors for two thousand years, and at the present time there is apparently no ground for softening the statement. It is a hard thing for the individual, and doubly hard for an aggregation of individuals.¹ Deeply

¹ The following passage, touching upon the religious implications of the war, need not be regarded as foreign to the subject of this study. The writer was detained one month in Switzerland by the outbreak of hostilities, and thereafter he shared in the obsession common to all American travellers. So absorbing was the surrounding atmosphere of tragedy that in attempting to treat the pastoral and more reposeful side of Dr. Coit's work, there was a pardonable confusion in his mind as to which was the real digression, the war or Dr. Coit. Every interest in life seemed to be cast into the alembic of this world-catastrophe, to be tested as to its validity, Dr. Coit and St. Paul's School along with the

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significant is the fact that, in the appalling cataclysm of Christian nations, this year of our Lord 1914, no appeal is heard which derives from Christianity. We hear much of a monopolized God, but nothing of Christ nor of his message as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount. No sophistry can eliminate from his teaching the essential note of humility and voluntary suffering, and yet, under the momentary despotism of the beast that is in all of us, this note is silent. Even the belief in God is threatened. A Roman Catholic priest is reported to have said recently in the pulpit of a church in Paris: "If France is again crushed in the present struggle, then there is no God." This utterance may perhaps be discounted as the par-

rest. For the moment the literary handling of the pastoral work of a humble minister of the Gospel of Peace had an air of absurd unreality; accordingly the business of composition was suspended. And in resuming the essay after his return to this country, the writer felt the need of some hyphen to connect him once more with the world of quiet things. Hence, the war digression with its implied ultimate victory of things spiritual. Such a victory would have been Dr. Coit's conviction, whatever might be the fortunes of war, or his own personal sorrows. His faith in the Christian revelation would have remained unshaken.

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donable counsel of despair, but it betrays a tendency. About the same date, the second week of the war, a higher plane was reached in the passionate declamation of Canon Alexander at St. Paul's Cathedral, who said: "If England is defending an unrighteous cause, may God break the sword in her hands, and make her name a by-word among the nations." This last utterance is splendid, but as an appeal to justice it rises no higher than the Cardinal Virtues. Even of these virtues, Justice, Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude, the fourth is alone wholly in favor; temporarily the other three are in abeyance, stored away for approval after the passions have been fully satisfied. Perhaps the nearest approach to Christian doctrine and principle is found in the fine saying of Secretary Bryan that, 'If one is to further peace, he must expect to suffer measurably.' Patience and long-suffering are, indeed, notable badges of Christianity, and neither material science nor human pride will ever rid the world of the necessity, as well as the duty, of prac-

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tising these ethics. Mankind for ages thought it could get on very well with the four Cardinal Virtues, but time and again history and the human heart have proved their inadequacy. The Greek moralists suspected this want, and philosophy in all lands and ages has groped for the Christian complement. Even healthy childhood, which is nothing if not gorgeously pagan, vaguely feels the need of a deeper principle. Very recently an ingenuous little boy at St. Paul's School showed that he was feeling out for something better than mere pagan rectitude when, on being asked to name the cardinal virtues, he stumbled over the fourth, but thought that it might be "Chastitude."

In the general bewilderment which has succeeded to the initial shock occasioned by the world-war, the leading minds of our race have difficulty in recovering their equanimity. Something has happened. They are not quite so sure of their position. Some great things seem small, and some neglected things bulk large. The "Paradoxians" and other

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faddists are likely to be among the unemployed for a while, or will be obliged to bend their faculties to things that really matter. Possibly the Superman, the Futurist, and the Vorticist may disappear altogether. No prophet can foretell the issue, in regard to things spiritual, of a catastrophe which has never had a parallel in history. In what condition will the human mind emerge from a desolating war of three or four years' duration? Will ideals be the same? Will such a word as patriotism have the same connotation? At this moment, in six countries at least, the blood tingles at the glorious words of Shakespeare:

SIWARD. "Had he his hurts before?"

ROSS. "Ay, on the front."

SIWARD. "Why then, God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sons as I have hairs,

I would not wish them to a fairer death."

But events are moving fast, and men are thinking; and the utter horror of it all may provoke a cry that will rend the barriers, more or less artificial, of nationalism, and make operative the brotherhood of the human

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race. How local and partial the sentiment of patriotism really is may be seen from the rapidity with which a little injustice and a little geography converts the *English* patriot Washington into the *American* patriot Washington. We certainly would not impugn even remotely the absolutely proper conduct of our national hero, but it is conceivable that the time may come when the sentiment of loyalty may have another outlet, since men will then respect the all-inclusive commandment to "Love one another."

In the meantime, the sorrowful limitations of human nature will assert themselves. Priests shall thunder forth the Sixth and the Tenth commandments, but the war will still continue, and the great Christian inconsistency place itself on record. Surely no German, English, French or Russian missionary can henceforth find much standing in heathen countries. The least sophisticated savage of the South Sea islands will politely decline his good offices, on the ground that he has his own traditional mode of slugging, and prefers

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it. His confusion of mind will be still further augmented by being told that war is a "biological necessity," even though in the same breath he is taught to say: "Vergib uns unsere Schulden, wie wir unsern Schuldigern vergeben." And yet, it is through these contradictions intensified by the glare of burning towns that the minds of men are being brought back from the shallows of a material age to the deep facts of existence. We all know in our hearts that we are capable of every conceivable form of crime, but we had forgotten it. We have constantly asserted in our formularies that we are "by nature born in sin and the children of wrath," and we do not believe it. But the Christian Church believes it, and has consistently taught it notwithstanding the lapses of her practice; and to-day she offers to a bewildered world Love and Forgiveness as the only economic forces potent enough to meet on their own ground the hateful passions of mankind. She says to-day, as she has said through the ages, though often with a lisp-

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ing accent, that the spirit of the Beatitudes is the only panacea for the heart-breaking sorrows of life, and that the doctrine of the Incarnation is the only solution of the mystery of existence. The entire world desires peace, but there can be no peace if the individual will is set on its own selfish ends. No man can be a just man, much more, a Christian man, if his major note is vindictiveness. The "things that belong unto peace" are individual rather than gregarious, and come from a habit of mind rather than from an impulse. Peace-meetings and peacelitanies are wholly good, as tending to create the atmosphere that will promote peace. We pray because we are bidden to do so. But God's ways are inscrutable, and there is a species of cant in ascribing to Him at the present crisis an assured disciplinary function. We cannot without hypocrisy say that we are grateful for the chastening effect of this dreadful war. We naively sympathize rather with the intuitions of the little culprit who was punished by his human

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father, and who said, when his father averred that the chastisement hurt him more than it did the boy, that he was very contrite at the thought of obliging him to suffer so much.

And yet it may well be that the present unspeakable agony of the entire world is to furnish the greatest practical argument of the ages in behalf of the truth of God's moral plan for his creatures. The frightful carnage and waste of every sort, along with the consequent despair in countless homes, will lead men to look beneath the surface of trivial things in order to find some reason for living. And they will find it in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and they will find peace in the consolations which the Church, notwithstanding her occasional aberrations, has always offered in her offices and ministry.

It was such a genuine Christianity, in the full historic sense, that possessed the soul of Henry Coit. "His master-motive was the love of Christ, the love of souls and a burning zeal for the service of that Church in which he believed are garnered up the

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treasures of grace, with all that comes to us from a primitive antiquity, and the long line of Truth's witnesses and a divine succession of the benefactors of the human race." The pastoral heart, which was his dominant note through life, developed early, and its direction became manifest in the conduct of his charge of the parish school at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in the three years from 1851 to 1854. He was but twenty-four years of age, and yet the entire Henry Coit of later years was there potentially. The following letter, which was addressed to his boys as a holiday monition, is strikingly characteristic of the wise and loving pastor in his prime.

"MY DEAR BOYS:

"Though what is good for one vacation is good for another also, yet I am quite sure that it will not be amiss for me to send you a second letter, if only to assure you that I have you all in remembrance, and to remind you of those hints and directions which I have already given, to enable you to make this vacation a good one.

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“Do not begrudge a little of your present leisure to voluntary work. The useful reading or study which you do now of your own accord will be worth twice as much to you as the same amount performed in the regular course of school duties. Take up some book of history, biography, or travels suited to your capacity, and read it carefully through. If you set apart a fixed hour every day for this purpose you will be much more likely to be systematic and to accomplish what you undertake. The time which you spend in active manly exercise — as riding on horseback, boating — is not lost. Those hours only are lost, and lost to your lasting injury, which you waste in listless lounging. Lounging at home is bad for your mind and troublesome to your friends. Lounging in the streets is bad for mind and morals both. Make your time pass swiftly and happily by keeping mind and body in healthful exercise. Have the manliness to keep out of the way of idle, worthless boys, of whom there are so many here and everywhere — whose words are profane and vile — whose actions are low, vulgar, mischievous and corrupting. About such company say, in the words of one better and wiser than any of us: “O my soul, come

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not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united." It is these "evil communications" which "corrupt good manners," which make me dread the holidays for you, and against which no one can guard you successfully but yourselves.

"If you attend to what is said above, then I am sure you will return to school after vacation improved and strengthened in mind and body. I hope none of you will forget to read your chapter daily. If any of you have neglected it so far, be persuaded to begin now, not for my sake only, but for your own good. Do not think there *can* be a vacation from what is right. There is never a day on which we can lawfully take vacation from prayer to our Heavenly Father. Why should we ever wish for one? Begin and end these days of rest by asking God's care and blessing. Do not make your vacation — Sundays — vacations from going to Church. Rather use them well now, that your well-spent Sundays may shed their light over all the days that follow.

"I wish that I could help you all by some more effectual means than words, to spend this season well. Besides these my words of

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affectionate counsel and persuasion, you shall have my hearty prayer. May God bless you all, and keep you both now and ever from forgetting your duty to Him.

“Your affectionate and faithful friend,

H. A. COIT.

St. James's School, Lancaster, July 13, 1854.”

It must have been at about this date also that the daguerreotype picture fronting this page was taken. Recently found, along with the letter printed above, it is a boon indeed to all of us who care for the truth of things, and, who, though surprised at the fresh, youthful visage and quaint attire, are not shocked at the thought that the grave Doctor could ever have faced life with so fearless and care-free a gaze. Such a face is its own interpretation, and may well be a symbol of the valorous attitude that should mark all the efforts of St. Paul's,

“To take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them.”

The story of Dr. Coit's personal relations with his boys on the religious side is an inti-



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From a daguerreotype about 1854

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mate one and must be treated with due reserve; in no event will it appeal to all readers. Doubtless many letters could be collected, and many moving anecdotes could be related, but nothing would be gained by lifting the veil from the deep things of life; and the slightest exaggeration or indiscretion would weaken the argument. Every genuine old boy will bear testimony in his heart to the tireless efforts of Dr. Coit to bring out the best that was in him. Indeed, it is only for convenience that the pastoral side of the first Rector is made a sub-division in this essay; it was in reality his one absorbing side. Everything with him seemed to have a spiritual quality.

. The first two decades of the school history were lived in an atmosphere which might fairly be called theological. Not a few of the masters were studying for the ministry, and theological text-books were much in evidence. The writer was necessarily won over to the compelling interests of his friends, Hall Harrison, John Hargate, Robert A. Benton,

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George B. Johnson and Charles A. Morrill. Ordinations were not infrequent, and church questions were burning subjects. We did not always agree, but a moderate and reasoned high-churchmanship prevailed. One could not but become familiar with the books most in vogue: "Pearson on the Creed," "Browne on the Articles," "Butler's Analogy," "Bull on the Incarnation," "Andrewes' Sermons," "Jeremy Taylor," not to speak of the "Fathers," Cornelius à Lapide and the "Commentaries." The writer at about this date read St. John's Gospel in Greek with Dr. Coit, and contracted a living conviction of the verbal inspiration of Scripture. He has no quarrel now with any particular theory of inspiration, but, at the time, from out his twenty years, he felt a great awe at the thought of any trifling with a Greek letter, and was wholly with Dr. Coit in ascribing a sort of moral obliquity to Dean Alford when he made *ἵνα* denote purpose when it should be result, or result when it should be purpose. The boys naturally had

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no direct share in the labors and aspirations of their guides, but they caught much of the prevailing tone. Many were sincerely religious. Dr. Coit differed uncompromisingly with Arnold in his estimate of the capacity of the boy for religious training. Dr. Arnold had said in a letter to a friend, "My object will be, if possible, to form Christian men, for Christian boys I can scarcely hope to make. I mean that from the naturally imperfect state of boyhood, they are not susceptible of Christian principles in their full development and practice." But Dr. Coit boldly aimed at making Christian boys, and he was willing to risk their turning out Christian men. Doubtless he felt with Plato that Virtue is Knowledge and can be taught; he certainly believed that boys are capable of genuine religious faith and devotion. And yet, we fancy that Arnold and Coit were not very far apart after all in their practice, for Arnold himself was reproached by his critics for an over-emphasis on moral thoughtfulness and introspection in his boys.

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The agencies which will recur to the minds of alumni as chiefly developing the religious and moral tone of the St. Paul's boy in Dr. Henry Coit's time are: the weekly Sacred Studies, the Confirmation class, the Sunday morning sermon, regularly by the Rector, and the chapel services; to which may be added the Thursday Night Talk, "*Causerie du jeudi*." These agencies are in every church-school, and, formally, are about the same thing. The great point is that they should be instinct with life and meaning. Dr. Coit, as might be surmised, was not particularly systematic or dogmatic in his handling of sacred lessons. Very sensitive as to text-books, he was inclined to make his own manuals, basing the junior instruction on the Church Catechism, and the more expository teaching of the Seniors on the Collects and Gospels for each Sunday. In later years text-books of Bible history were introduced. For a long time he taught all the classes in person, esteeming this to be his peculiarly clerical and responsible work. As the school

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grew in numbers, this work had to be shared, but he was always solicitous that it should be performed in a dignified manner, setting it apart from the secular studies of the week and stripping it of the perfunctory. No written examinations in sacred studies were thought of in the earlier days, but the formidable oral examination in the Catechism, which took place twice a year in the School Chapel, dates back to the beginning of things. This public function has been the secret terror and the utter undoing of the best of us since time was.

It has been objected by some of the faithful that our religious teaching here has never been definite enough, that our boys are not technically fortified against criticism and assaults of unbelief. If this were in a measure true, and if it were due to the quality of Dr. Coit's instruction, it would not surprise those who had lived close to him. For his belief seemed of the kind that had got beyond the evidential stage and was wholly absorbed in the contemplation of its

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object. He did not seem to crave, at least in the days of his best work, a remorselessly logical statement of all dogmas that divide men. He would not teach more definitely than he thought. We remember very well his quoting with warm approval, in one of his addresses at Communicants' Meeting, the cautious words of Queen Elizabeth regarding the Eucharist:

"Christ was the word that spake it;
He took the bread and brake it;
And what His word did make it,
That I believe and take it."

But his theology does not concern us directly here, even if we felt able to assess it; elsewhere a separate paper might well be given to Dr. Coit's theological position in the Church. Such a paper has already been suggested to his eldest son, the Rev. Charles Wheeler Coit, who would treat the subject with perfect competency, and who would, undoubtedly, stress a certain yearning for what is termed catholic truth that marked Dr. Coit's later years.

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A cursory reading of the single volume of the first Rector's sermons, published by Moffat, Yard & Co., will begin by puzzling and presently by reassuring any one who heard them delivered year after year. At the moment of delivery, they went straight to their mark, reinforced by the personality of the speaker; our memories pronounce them great. We cannot now, when no longer under the spell of living voice and manner, say that they are great as literature; but perhaps they were better than literature. Written for the adolescent and the immature, often in haste and amid constant interruptions, with little conscious effort at form or style, these sermons must not be compared with the formal utterance of men whose business is preaching. And yet, they seem to the writer not unworthy to stand this comparison, if the proper object of preaching be to stimulate the conscience and direct the will. Dr. Coit aimed at scarcely more than this. Not infrequently there are passages of great beauty and strong imagination, but

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they were spontaneous and not studied. A pulpit style, "*travaillé*," as the French say, was as foreign to his literary habits as to his nature. We cannot easily imagine him polishing his phrase, and, as to epigrams, they did not readily pass the door of his lips. His method of composition was patterned after the Port Royalist dictum: "*Une seule fois, sous l'œil de la Grâce*," and the further injunction: "*Arroser son ouvrage par des prières*." And thus fortified, his chief qualification was his unrivalled knowledge of the human soul and his deep sympathy with the problems of boys, whom he did not aim at probing by writing down to their level, but by pulling them up to his own standards.

After these sympathetic premises, it is at some risk that one proceeds to cite illustrations. We shall quote, however, two passages from these sermons, taken almost at random, which seem to represent fairly his habit of practical preaching, though they are not, perhaps, in his most brilliant manner.

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(1)

“There is a helpful use of the imagination. We may call upon it to aid us in laying out the work of our lives, or rather in laying that basis of principle which gives ground for hope that our work, whatever it is, will, some of it, be lasting. Try to make such use of this gift of God now. Imagine one of you, who have been scholars here during this last year, coming back fifty years hence — in 1939 — to see the scenes where several years of his life were passed, and those, as he would then realize, by no means the least important. Of course, I ask you to prop your imagination with the hope and confidence that the School itself may live and grow stronger with the flight of time; that while many outward features are changed, still some landmarks will remain. This holy place, for example, mellowed by the lapse of years, its tower completed, the windows filled with storied panes, a glorious reredos in its proper place, the Saints of all ages looking down from window, niche, and screen, or gathered above the altar around their Lord, their strength and refuge. It is the last Evensong of the last Sunday of the term. The bells chime out

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melodiously, and the long file of boys, masters and clergy enters. With curious, mingled sensations he, who to-day sits here a lad, but then a man, with a large experience of life, whose struggle is nearly over, looks on, and, as he looks, almost loses the present in the past so far away. Again he hears the organ's glorious voice, and the old prayers and psalms said by strange lips, in tones that are strange to him. He strains his eyes and memory along the seats and stalls, and beyond the chancel arch, but sees not one face of all so familiar to him now. He pauses and thinks of this one and that one, gone; their roll of life ended and folded up and laid away. One lies in the bed of ocean, the graveyards through the land hold of most of the others the mouldering dust. Several of the younger here, he afterwards may learn, are still, with whitening hair and ripening wisdom, carrying on the work. Several in older manhood, it may be (God grant it!), are doing His work in the Church in high or lowly office, in parts of the world still unwon to Christ, or in those nearer home, where what is known by multitudes of saving truth only becomes their condemnation. He will think of some he knew here who had started life poorly and inade-

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quately, and then, by God's grace, remembered their better lessons, and turned to Him with all their hearts; and of others who still went on reckless of good, neither hearing nor heeding the warning voice, and of whom none may say, "Their witness is in Heaven, and their record is on high." But of the larger number of those who are gathered here to-day the history of their earthly lives will by that time be over. Cold hearts and tender hearts, the corrupt body and the body undefiled, will alike be wasting away as fast as the action of natural forces can waste them; only the spirits will live on, and fifty years hence will be as living and as conscious of their identity as is each one at the present moment. Suppose this visitor to have drawn the obvious inferences from the experience of life. It will occur to him that some stay is needed for a man in presence of this fact of continual decay and change, something to compensate for the losses, to uphold and secure one amid such shocks and disasters of time. It is no consolation to know that these earthly bodies will, after a little, be taken up and distributed through the material universe, and find their involuntary perpetuation in grasses and vapors, in trees and meadow

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flowers. Where meanwhile is the part to be that never dies? — that in us which lives and loves, and does not and cannot forget? Is there nothing to hold by, when all men have forgotten that such a being as I ever was? Is there no memory in which I may live on, save that which is now registering, though unheeded, all my neglects of duty and all my misdeeds?

Our visitor (you will remember he is one of you), with fifty years added to his mental and physical development, goes back in thought to what he himself has known and observed. He has had his share of what is called pleasure, social enjoyments and distinctions, gayeties and sights, and keen physical excitement, and gratification of the senses, ease and travel, books and pictures and art, the love and appreciation of which is in so many cases a mere sham and pretence. What comfort or relief comes from these delights, when the real storms break and the spirit is thrown back upon itself for peace and inward satisfaction? What support will even the more innocent and less selfish pleasures give, when the body, the link between our true selves and this outer world, lies a wreck on the graveyard shore, and the im-

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material world here becomes the real one, and our only fellowship is with good and holy spirits, or with spirits of evil? Suppose one to have been greatly favored in the accumulation of riches. It requires ability in a man to amass wealth, and there is an intellectual gratification in planning and succeeding in its acquisition. And its possession counts in the world; it gives power and worship among men. Its right and wise use enrolls one among the benefactors of mankind. Its accompaniments may do much to ennoble and exalt one, if not perverted to merely selfish ends. But the richest of men comes to a moment when all that wealth can purchase is worthless to him. Even now, it never wins true love and loyalty, but is rather a stumbling-block to these, and in the hour of death it avails nothing, nor gives one courage or covert for the exigencies of that new and untried existence. It may make it harder to leave this world, but it does not help one in doing so. And as to honor and position among men, this is the conclusion at which a really great man arrived: "Years fly swiftly, and it is full time to be reasonable, and to look on life no longer dazzled by the sunbeams of youth. Let us

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be just towards God. He has not created men that they may attain celebrity, a thing which few ever reach, or care for when they have reached it. God knows the littleness of the world too well to give His creatures so poor an aim as that. He created the stars in order to disgust us with it. Glory is the illusion of childhood and of some men who never quite grow out of childish ways. A soul really capable of glory does not think about it; he is too great for that." So muses the man of nearly seventy years, as he revisits the scenes of his boyish failures or successes. Where are those whom he knew in these far-off days? What has been the issue in this and the other world of these lives? Of their training here and elsewhere for good or evil? Did they sow to the flesh, of the flesh to reap corruption? Or, with all mistakes and hindrances, to the spirit, to reap life everlasting? For surely as men sow, they reap, and none can think that pleasures or riches or honors or any other earthly props will stand the sweep and pressure of Eternity."

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(2)

“Look at the picture in the parable. It is drawn by Everlasting Truth. It shows us how the imagination, the memory, the power of association are Divinely given to help us against our temptations; in the words of the Litany, “To strengthen us when we do stand, to raise us up when we fall, and finally to beat down Satan under our feet.” The youth in the parable whom we all call the prodigal son, though he is not called that in the Gospel, has had a sorrowful experience. He has cast off restraint, the restraint of love and duty, of home and conscience — of law, social and Divine. To use a late phrase, he has wearied of the stagnation of comfort, the quiet order, the loving care of his father’s house. Like so many, he has undervalued the sweetness of innocence, of lying down at night and rising in the morning in health of body and mind, with no black stain in the memory, no frenzied grip at some base indulgence, which has come to grief in the possession, just as an apple of painted glass would in the hands of a child. The hot blood surges through his veins, and cries out for freedom to have his own and do

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what he will with it. The daily round of prayer and blessing is irksome. Any daily round is irksome. He chafes at his mother's gentle remonstrances and his father's firm refusals. He has taken the privileges of his childhood as of course, with no thought of gratitude to the Giver of all good things. The peace and plenty of his home, the innocent enjoyments, the sunshine of parental love, the opportunities for training in every good, useful, noble pursuit have no value in his eyes. He will have none of them. He tires of them all. Innocence is stupid. Goodness is life on a dull level. O for the wilderness and the sea! To try things for one's self, to pluck at will the poisonous wild flowers, to lose his way in the trackless desert, to stray into the portal and chambers of moral death! This is what A., B., and a great many more, are doing. And why not I? His short sight does not reach the final stages, or his self-confidence imagines that he can hold back from that uttermost downfall. What he wants is life, without conscience, without duty, without God. This he fancies is to live like a man, with some dash and swing and sparkle in life, although he shatters a father's hopes

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and breaks his mother's heart. In the true history of the Gospel, the waste and riot and the infinite folly are traced to their end. A far-off land of desolation, a region of the shadow of death, desertion of summer friends, utter, abject want, the soul's famine, the body's starvation, complete degradation, only to be expressed by feeding on swine's food and the feeding of swine — such is the issue of swinish standards of living and swinish pleasures. Is it not absolute bondage? Where is the fancied freedom? The emancipation from the bonds of duty to follow one's own will? Is it not the worst of slaveries? Then when the inevitable hour comes, and the fires of passion are spent, and the precious gifts of life exhausted, memory becomes an avenger. The thought of the past is an awful reproach, The early days, before vice had taken root, come back to him, when the morning land was fresh with the verdure and blossoms of spring, when the voice of parents was sweet in childish ears, and the chances of happiness and blessing, of noble, unselfish action, of life rising higher and higher to all things virtuous and lovely and of good report, still lay in the near distance, and ignorance of evil was indeed bliss. All this rises before the

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mind of the broken, remorseful, hopeless spendthrift. What might have been! That is the barbed arrow that rankles in the wound. While his choice was still in his hands, and the lovely helps of home, and the means and encouragements God devises to win us to His service were still his, how had he tossed them away! And now where am I? and what am I? Compare this and that. The swinish pleasures and the swinish companionship; the loathesome conversation, the beggarly end of it all; and there in the dear old home were cheerful gladness, and tender greetings, and plenteous food for mind and heart as well as body — the Bread of Life was and is there! “How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!” Alas! In the majority of cases, the lost soul stops here. I must warn all of you younger ones who are before me that it is not safe to count on rising like the prodigal in our Blessed Lord’s parable from the thought of what might have been to the hope of what yet may be. Vicious indulgence, sinning against light and knowledge, paralyzes the moral powers. The long disuse of prayer incapacitates one for praying. Reason and experi-

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ence may enter their unanswerable protests, memory and association may call from the years long past, but the will may be hopelessly weakened. As I have seen again and again, the man may have no excuse to offer, he is miserable and knows it and owns it, but he dreads moral effort. When he tries to rise, his chains weigh more heavily; when he makes a step forward, they rattle, he loses heart; the Tempter is always close by to whisper, "It is of no use." And so in the fearful language of St. Peter: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Very likely he may have already provided himself with a reason for inaction. He has no faith. He has taken up with some form of plausible error. He has discovered that the Scriptures are found unworthy of credence. There is no logical foundation for the Gospel history. It is full of legendary accretions. Therefore, there is no Saviour, no Precious Blood poured freely out to cleanse him from his sins, no intercession, and no Intercessor. Everything is uncertain and unprovable. If there is a God, He is too far away or too kind to mark my infirmities, or to hold me to account for them. It is all a

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chance or a fatality. I cannot help myself. And so, the day of grace passes, and the shadows lengthen, and that night comes on, in which there is no possibility of self-deceiving and no opportunity for repentance, though one sought for it carefully and with tears. Many of us here may feel that this is an extreme case; that it does not apply to us; that we have not strayed far from the paths of righteousness; that still sweet in our ears sound the Church bells of our home; that we have not utterly broken with our childhood. But, if we are conscious that innocence of evil is no longer ours; if we know of some easily besetting sin; if we find our prayers, whether in public or private, tedious and unprofitable; if we are glad of an excuse to omit them; if we set little value on that Bread of Life which is broken on these earthly Altars for our souls' salvation; if our preparation for It is very slight, and our sense of need of It numbed and callous — then make sure we should contrast what might have been with what is, and before it is too late, while youth and time are ours (or if not youth, still some measure of health and some little time), to think of what may be, of that full return of heart and soul and

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mind to himself, to which our Lord calls us. Think of those blessed privileges of his House to which we are so indifferent, of His merciful promise of welcome and forgiveness, if we come pleading our unworthiness and His all-sufficient Sacrifice.

‘In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling.’”

It was inevitable that Dr. Coit should make much of The Lord’s Day; the Sunday was to him what it was to Henry Vaughan: “Heaven once a week.” He loved hymns like “O Quanta Qualia,”

“O what the joy and the glory must be,
Those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see!”

and the quaint lines of Herbert and Vaughan were often on his lips. He loved such verses as the following, not only for their piety, but for their poetry:

SUNDAY

O DAY most calm, most bright!
The fruit of this, the next world’s bud,
The indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a Friend, and with His blood;
The couch of time; care’s balm and bay;
The week were dark, but for thy light:
Thy torch doth show the way.

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The Sundays of man's life,
Threaded together on time's string,
Make bracelets to adorn the wife
Of the eternal glorious King.
On Sunday heaven's gate stands ope;
Blessings are plentiful and rife,
More plentiful than hope.

This day my Saviour rose,
And did enclose this light for His:
That, as each beast his manger knows,
Man might not of his fodder miss.
Christ hath took in this piece of ground,
And made a garden there for those
Who want herbs for their wound.

— GEORGE HERBERT

SON-DAYES

BRIGHT shadows of true rest! some shoots of blisse;
Heaven once a week;
The next world's gladnesse prepossest in this;
A day to seek
Eternity in time; the steps by which
We climb above all ages; lamps that light
Man through his heap of dark days; and the rich
And full redemption of the whole week's flight!

— HENRY VAUGHAN

The spiritual atmosphere of these verses is certainly not very common to-day, nor has it ever been possible to make such an atmosphere a medium in which any large community of boys can breathe naturally and

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normally. Moreover, Dr. Coit was no Sab-batarian; his preferred Sunday was something between the Puritan Sabbath and the Continental Sunday. Happiness for his boys he unquestionably aimed at, but he insisted that the first day of the week should be set apart and devoted to things that concern the final end of man. There was to be no secular work, and, alas! no games or sport. No boy could don his sweater or duck-trowsers; Sunday-clothes were to be worn throughout the day and a seemly hat. The general tone of the school was to be one of peace and quiet. Musical instruments were taboo, and a phonograph would have been a painful intrusion. Apparently such rules and traditions prevail to-day in the great English public schools, but with us in America some modification of Puritan propriety was bound to come. Our ideals are not favorable to the strain of ultra-decorum, and it may be said in general that the American boy has a fine democratic indifference to a certain sense of form that is characteristic of his English

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cousin. Too much neatness in attire is a manifest bore, and a little excessive heat or bodily languor suggests a prompt recourse to tropical fashions in dress. He would have a lofty scorn for such a policy as is indicated by the following notice taken from a London paper of July, 1914:

HARROW AND THE HEAT

RELAXATION OF THE DRESS RULES FORBIDDEN

No relaxation of the sumptuary laws of Harrow School is being allowed by the authorities, the hot weather not being held to be an excuse. Apparently some would-be pioneers have attempted dress reform, for the following announcement has been issued:—

“The school are reminded that the rules relating to school dress must be strictly observed.

“On all occasions when the black tail coat or jacket is worn, a stiff collar must also be worn.

“The flannel shirt must be worn buttoned to the top by all boys passing through the streets when changed for games.”

But difficulties and reactions are not arguments in themselves, and a sober Sunday was a part of Dr. Coit's conception of Christian discipline in a Church school. Doubtless the impressions of Alumni will differ greatly in regard to the old Sunday observance at St. Paul's. Choir-boys, of whom

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there have been nearly a thousand, were so occupied and usually so much interested in the musical parts of the chapel service that Sunday for them probably passed happily and quickly. But the average boy, with his constitutional repugnance to inaction and dulness, could not be expected to find an appeal in the notion of "endless sabbaths." Dr. Coit, however, waived the question of appeal. He stressed the doing of certain things from a sense of duty alone, and did not force the thesis that enjoyment is a necessary element in really edifying worship. If the sermon were dull, then "God takes a text and preacheth patience." The boys were invited to consider it a valuable bit of training to learn to sit still, and for one day in the week to rest both body and mind. And so, Dr. Coit claimed that, apart from the purely religious function of Sunday, a strict observance of the day sent each boy back to the routine of Monday's work with a certain freshness of attack, as if from a secular holiday; for twenty-four hours, at

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least, his mind had lain fallow. This was the more true from the fact that no newspaper was opened on Sunday, and the range of reading was limited to a prescribed collection of books called the Sunday Library. And yet the day was not gloomy, except to those who were determined to find it so. Every Sunday in the year was a feast-day, and even Lent did not involve an exception for those boys who tried to pass it faithfully. Sundays in Lent were brightened and somewhat glorified for a few of the boys, because, having fasted a little on the week-days (and Dr. Coit did not dilute "fasting" into mere self-denial), they felt that they could feast on Sundays. It will readily be inferred that the Lord's Day, though not devoted to toil, was a fairly active day for the whole school, with its prescriptions and options extending from an "Early Celebration" in Chapel before breakfast to the formal "Good Night" at 8.30 p. m. in the School Room along with the hymn, "Now the day is past and gone."

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But busy as Dr. Coit was with his responsible charge, he made Sunday a special time for looking after the people of the neighborhood. In the first years of St. Paul's, the farmers and residents of the vicinity attended Chapel along with the scholars. Later, with the growth of the school, it was necessary to provide special services. After the completion of the new chapel in 1888, the old chapel was practically handed over to the local congregation. The body of worshippers, though not large, was devoted to the Rector; many of our neighbors were his close friends. He baptized many and buried many. Few functions, whether festival, ferial or funeral could dispense with his ministrations, and his memory to-day is cherished up and down the country-side. Though he rarely walked for exercise, his tall form striding along the country roads, or in his old buggy with Mrs. Coit, when he was engaged in some errand of cheer or easement, was a picture very familiar to boys on their afternoon tramps.

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This extra-clerical work Dr. Coit regarded as a part of his ministry, and its influence will be long felt in the environs of Concord. With the city itself he was not very closely identified, though his relations with life-long friends of the school were very cordial, and his personal attachment to Bishop Niles and the clergy of Concord was deep and sincere. And so his personality was not without witness in the capital city and throughout the state of New Hampshire; and, in a very true sense, it abides there to-day in the small body of spiritually-minded priests of the church, who, with Bishop Parker at their head, are conscious that they drew much of their best inspiration as former St. Paul's boys from the First Rector.

In a school of a thousand boys, like Eton, the religious and moral influence of the Head Master must necessarily emanate from the pulpit; he can come into personal relations with but few of his charge. St. Paul's has not, as yet, coveted a roster of pupils beyond the supervision and personal knowledge of a

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single man. Dr. Coit never admitted that three hundred boys were more than he could account for. Even after the time when years and sorrow began to tell upon his powers, his zeal for the welfare of each boy did not abate, and it is safe to say that no boy quite escaped his loving scrutiny up to the end of his mission. And nothing claimed more imperiously his energetic interest than each boy's attitude towards what he considered the greatest thing in the world. And so, the Doctor must know, as each boy arrived at a responsible age, how he stood in regard to the Christian religion. The Confirmation class of each year was an obvious challenge to the Christian choice, and it lay very close to the Rector's heart. There was, we think, no compulsion of any sort, and, naturally, some boys never yielded to the gentle moral pressure that led the majority to take upon themselves the vows of Confirmation. We doubt whether any one ever really regretted the step, even though a few may have ostentatiously, under stress, attrib-

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uted their subsequent lapses to the reactions of early over-stimulation of their moral nature. Of prigs there were very few. Dr. Coit was too wise and too manly to be satisfied or deceived by any exterior manifestation of simulated piety. Thorough in his training, penetrating in his intuitions, he prepared each boy, as if he were the only boy, and made him feel that the choice he was making was the most momentous step of his life. Perhaps in some cases, it was the best moment of life. There was a strange and isolating atmosphere that hung over the few days preceding the Ascension Day on which a boy was confirmed. No one talked about his approaching confirmation, and very few of the school at large were aware, previous to the public ceremony, of the identity of the candidates. And when it was all over, life seemed to begin afresh.

However, Dr. Coit was no sentimentalist, and he realized only too keenly that Confirmation was but a beginning, and that the future of his boys was an untravelled country

To
Augustus Muhlenberg, Swift,
with the love
of his friend
N. A. C.

Ascension Day -
May 30. 1867.
First Sunday after Trinity.
June 23. 1867.

"Be thou faithful unto
death" and I will give thee
a Crown of Life."

FACSIMILE OF INSCRIPTION

Written by Dr. Coit

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as full of disillusion and surprises as that traversed by the pilgrim of John Bunyan. He never seemed to be complaisant over the large number of communicants that St. Paul's has added to the Church, a number greatly augmented in the twenty years since his death. He must have been conscious that he was the instrument, but he was not given to dwelling on the satisfactions of his responsible office. With some hesitation we have had reproduced here a typical inscription, taken from the fly-leaf of the Greek Testament which he gave to a member of his Confirmation class. The book in question came into possession of the writer on the death of Mr. Swift, and he is sure that old boys will be glad to refresh their memories with the sight of the Doctor's handwriting, though of a formal type, and at the same time, associate affectionately the donor with the recipient of the Greek Testament.

The most enduring impressions of Dr. Coit's pastoral work gather chiefly about the Old Chapel; he ministered but seven years

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in our present beautiful building, and his preaching was perhaps less effective there owing to the size of the auditorium and the limitations of his voice. But the fervor and content of his work were no-wise different. There was a little more ceremonial; the choir was vested, and the various offices were a little more stately. He never really laid stress on "functions," and we fancy that he always felt a little uncomfortable in processions. And, yet, an impressively ordered service was the rule in the chapel of his day. It was one of his convictions that the quiet, habitual performance of a religious duty, under forms that become familiar, is the true way to create habits that will endure, though he was no slave to routine, and always gladly availed himself of the aid of outside preachers who had the prophetic gift. Many such can be recalled. He distrusted the sensational; and the idea of the Christian Religion adapted to modern requirements had small meaning for him. And his taste was correspondingly severe.

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That his instincts and ideals in these matters were valid would seem to be indicated by the fact that his ways have proved acceptable, and an alumnus returning to the school to-day finds himself at home in the Chapel as perhaps nowhere else. He hears the same prayers and hymns, and is conscious of the same spirit of reverent devotion. No old boy of any judgment is looking for progress, so-called, in the simple matters of religion, and so he is always comforted to find that we still sing on Saturday night the time-honored "My days unclouded, as they pass," and at the end of each term, "Saviour, source of every blessing." These words are part of the St. Paul's legend, though the former hymn encountered in its early days one change of tune. Tunes, after all, are the winsome powers that make boys sing, and the best of words cannot long bear up under the load of a dull or difficult setting. We Americans have tried pathetically to sing the Star Spangled Banner, but, owing to the excessive range of the music, its rendering, on

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sea and on land, notwithstanding a swelling patriotism, has never been anything but lame, and often to our great, if amused, humiliation.

But, if Dr. Coit aimed at adhering to a dignified and protective ritual, he had no thought of standardizing the type of the youthful worshipper. Each one must be won and directed according to his endowment. Accordingly, not being omniscient, he had to take the risk of failure, and some of his boys have not turned out well. But he did not altogether let go his grip, and his letters pursued them affectionately. His boys certainly will bear no malice for this, and many of them have returned to their Christian allegiance.

The new Chapel, with its twenty-seven years of what for this country means antiquity, is, as far as material things go, the historic monument of the first Rector. His marble effigy lies there, though his body rests on the hill in the school cemetery along with his brother, Joseph Howland Coit, and

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John Hargate. It had long been his dream to see realized the plans for a really noble building of satisfying beauty, that should house the entire body of boys and lend itself sympathetically and appropriately to the forms of worship which he loved. And this dream was more than fulfilled, when boys and alumni took up the project and enthusiastically carried it to a successful conclusion from sheer devotion to the man that had made their school. No tablet on its walls records that the chapel was erected in his honor, but the names on the memorials, the scenes and inscriptions looking down from the windows, the grave faces in niche and on pedestal, are a cloud of witnesses to the fact that those who builded and those who are built into the structure compose, as it were, the spiritual coterie of the first Rector. They belong to his tenancy, and they close an epoch.

And time, the final arbiter of reputations, is giving Henry Coit his assured place among Educators. Some divided voices may be

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heard, but they do not count; what a man really is can scarcely be other than the haunting verdict passed on him by the majority of those that know. As in the sonnet that precedes this article and serves as its text, he belongs to the class of "quiet ministers," of "laborers that shall not fail when man is gone." Even his type is rare,—apart from his individuality. There are many classes and many temperaments in the great vocation of the school-master, and there is room for them, though the risks of failure are so obvious that one wonders often at the attraction which it exercises over the young and ambitious. What is the subtle spell that drives a man into the teaching profession, that invites him to pass his days among the eternally immature, to forego the honors and emoluments of life, and to accept cheerfully a social status in the world which, if not secondary, is, at least, ambiguous? Without attempting to answer this general question, we may say that the case was very simple with Dr. Coit. He was early drawn

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to the Christian ministry; his lot fell among boys; and he devoted himself to his task as being the first duty at hand. Putting duty and sacrifice first, without worldly ambition, without whims or hobbies, little affected with the fever of diversion, he got his happiness out of his work and his boys; and it was a life of work from first to last. We are confident that a just compensation rewards him now, and that his great pedagogic heart finds its rest in the satisfying presence of the Supreme Head Master of all men.

APPENDIX

THIS notice of Dr. Coit, which appeared in the *Horae Scholasticae*, March 8, 1895, is appended, not as a part of the Appreciation, but rather for the purpose of adding a little warmth to the colder generalizations of twenty years later. The First Rector is now but a name to a large number of the Alumni of St. Paul's School, and yet as the virtual creator of what is best in their Alma Mater, he will always claim an interest, and no true details of his life and death will be considered irrelevant.

THE RECTOR

THE event in the history of St. Paul's School, so long foreseen, so keenly apprehended, has occurred: our Rector, in God's own time, has been taken from us. There will come a day when we shall look back and say that all was right, that the end was glorious; that, spared a severance from his charge by long illness or gradual decay of powers, he died fittingly, his work done, the final impress given, his aspirations measurably fulfilled; but to us now the sense of loss is overwhelming; to us now Dr. Coit seems to have died ten years too soon.

The alumni will be eager to learn something of the details of the sad scenes through which we have been passing, and the writer has been asked to contribute this notice to the "Horæ." It is reassuring to him to feel that to write of Dr. Coit to them is like writing a letter to personal friends; their absorbing interest is as his own, their grief qualified only by the tempering effects which time and separation bring. The world at large will never quite comprehend our feelings toward the man who has just passed away, how he

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was to most St. Paul's boys their hero, their ideal of what is best worth striving to be; and this article, therefore, is written mainly for those who knew and loved its subject, and who will see no exaggeration in the warm appreciations of an alumnus who may claim an intimate knowledge of that about which he speaks. Fortunately, the four weeks which have elapsed since the sad events will afford some perspective, however slight, and will enable him to write more soberly than would have been possible earlier.

I

When the school reopened after the Christmas holidays, the Rector seemed to be in his usual health. It is true he had taken no rest. While others were off on their vacation, getting the much-needed change and recreation, he still remained at work, engaged in writing letters to parents and attending to the multitude of school details incidental to the closing of one term and the beginning of another. It is said that he wrote five hundred letters during the short three weeks. But his work for the school was by no means his only occupation. The vacation was his great opportunity for looking after the affairs of the neighborhood, and this Christmas, as usual, he spent

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himself lavishly in behalf of the country people who attended the Old Chapel, and of all who in any capacity were connected with the school and remained there during the holidays. He preached on the Sundays, and at a special service the last night of the year, when we are told that his sermon was sad and depressing, treating of death as though foreboding it. But notwithstanding this poor preparation for the cares and labors of our hardest term, he was bright and cheerful when we came together, and no one had a misgiving as to what was in store.

The boys returned to work on Wednesday, January 9. The Rector attended to all his duties until the week begining January 20. On that day he preached for the last time in chapel. During the ensuing few days he became unwell, and remained at the rectory, though not confined to his bed. However, on St. Paul's Day, January 25, he occupied his stall in chapel, and it is a coincidence that the anniversary of our patron saint should have been the occasion of his last public appearance in the place he loved so dearly. Only once again did he set foot within its walls, and this was at the early celebration of the Holy Communion, upon the following Sunday, January 27, when he occupied a seat in the choir. But this effort was too much for him, and, after com-

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municating, he was obliged to withdraw, making his way all alone to the vestry, where he was presently found in a fainting condition. On Monday he revived somewhat, and insisted on going over to his study in the schoolhouse for a few hours, but he was worse at night, and it was becoming evident that Dr. Coit was a very sick man. He never left his bed after that night, and, as the week went on, all the symptoms became more unfavorable. His disease, a form of influenza, developed into pneumonia, and was pronounced such by Dr. George B. Shattuck, son of the founder, on Saturday, February 2. His enfeebled constitution could make but little resistance to the deadliness of the attack, and in three days all was over. The end came in the early morning of Tuesday, February 5, at half past three o'clock.

The morning of February 5, 1895, will never be forgotten by any one who was a member of the community of St. Paul's School on that day. The blow fell like lightning out of a clear sky. The short week's illness had prepared no one for the catastrophe. The boys, especially, had not realized in the least that their revered master was in danger of death; so that when it was whispered about in the various houses at breakfast time that the Rector was dead, they

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were terribly shocked. They could not believe it. As they filed into the dining-room of the school, there was dead silence instead of the usual murmur of voices. Who will forget the Morning-Chapel that followed: the depressed air of the boys; the look of mingled grief and consternation on the faces of the masters; the hymn, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," not strong-voiced as is wont, but feeble and timeless; the prayer for a community in affliction; the vacant stall; the extreme solemnity of the exit? Then came the formal announcement by the Vice-Rector in the big school-room.

As the days wore on towards the funeral, the excitement was less, but the appreciation of what had happened was more marked. A mass-meeting was held by the boys in the auditorium, over which Mr. Parker was asked to preside. Speeches were made, and the resolutions which are published elsewhere in this number of the "Horæ" were passed. Great feeling was manifested, and, indeed, it may be said that throughout this trying ordeal the record of the boys, on the whole, has been what one would wish and what one would expect; they have stood their test well.

The funeral took place on Friday, February 8. The demonstration of feeling from the outside world was so great, as evidenced by the great

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number of telegrams and letters, that careful arrangements had to be made to receive a large gathering of mourners. There were one hundred and ten of the alumni present, including the residents,—a remarkable number when one considers that the greatest storm of the winter was raging. A full account of this most impressive event is given elsewhere. Owing to the storm, very few of the boys were allowed to go to the cemetery, but many of the alumni followed the carriages through the deep snow on the Hopkinton road, to be present at the last rites. The scene at the grave was extraordinary. The school burial-place lies on an eminence, and the rising ground afforded no shelter against the elements, which were in a tumult. The wind blew fiercely, the snow was drifting heavily; it was a sort of riot like a storm at sea. But there was something magnificent in the ruggedness of it all, not altogether alien to the great soul that had battled unceasingly for the good while on the earth, and then, when summoned, had austere left it without regret and without a word. Surely, this was to be no common burial. It seemed as though Nature were herself taking part in so notable a funeral.

But the summer will come, with the green grass and the leaves and flowers, and then it will be seen that the spot where the Rector has been laid

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to rest is beautiful, and in every respect appropriate. It overlooks the school, and commands a lovely prospect of the chapel tower, which, so recently built and dedicated to the memory of his wife, had long been the object of his heart's desire. That plot of ground, already hallowed by tender memories to many at St. Paul's has now become a sacred place, the shrine of St. Paul's pilgrims, whither, for years to come, the old boys will find their way, to gaze on the spot where "the Doctor" lies.

II

When a memoir or life of Dr. Coit shall be written, there will be much material connected with his early life that will be of great interest as showing the circumstances and influence which were instrumental in developing his character. Aside from the discipline of a pious and refined home, and aside from the stimulating effect of life at College Point under the devout and imaginative Muhlenberg, there were public events occurring in his youth which must have profoundly stirred him. He was but twelve years of age when Arnold died at Rugby, and fifteen at the time of the secession of Newman and the culmination of the Oxford movement. These events, with all that they implied and the litera-

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ture which they evoked, — The Christian Year, Stanley's Life, the Oxford Tracts, Pusey's Sermons, — must have been among his earliest impressions, and their influence may be easily traced through the succeeding years. But there is no opportunity now to enter upon this part of the subject; it will be sufficient to give the main facts of the Rector's life prior to the St. Paul's School period.

Dr. Henry Augustus Coit was born January 20, 1830, at Wilmington, Del., where his father, the late Rev. Joseph Howland Coit, D.D., was rector of St. Andrew's Church. In 1832 his family went to Plattsburgh, N. Y., his father having been elected rector of Trinity Church in that city. There his youth was passed until his fifteenth year, when he was sent to the well-known boarding-school at College Point, Flushing, L. I., under Dr. Muhlenberg. In due course he went to the University of Pennsylvania, but, his health giving out, he spent a winter in the South, chiefly in Georgia. On his return, he accepted the position of assistant professor of the ancient languages at St. James's College, Maryland. He remained there about two years, and then, in 1851, assumed charge of a large parish school under the direction of Dr., afterwards Bishop, Bowman at Lancaster, Pa. There he met Miss Mary Bowman

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Wheeler, to whom he was subsequently married. While at Lancaster, he was ordained Deacon by Bishop Alonzo Potter, the ceremony taking place at St. James's Church, Philadelphia. His ordination to the priesthood followed one year later, in 1854, in Plattsburgh, Bishop Horatio Potter officiating. He was at this time serving efficiently as missionary at Ellenburgh and Centreville, Clinton County, N. Y., having recently left his charge at Lancaster. Here he remained until, having been invited by the Trustees of St. Paul's School to become its Rector, he came to Concord, April 3, 1856. His marriage had taken place one week earlier, March 27, in the Church of the Epiphany at Philadelphia.

III

No attempt will be made here to present an orderly or complete account of Dr. Coit's work and character, or to estimate his place in Church and country. One feels that in this school paper a due reticence must be observed in regard to one "to whom all personal praise was at once pain and punishment." But we shall endeavor to recall to the minds of the alumni those traits and qualities which made him a power.

One of the most striking things in the multitude of letters which have reached the school is

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the sense of personal loss that they indicate. Although the great loss to the school is fully understood, it is the personal note that prevails. Every one feels that he has lost a friend, that a great influence for good has been withdrawn from his life. "He was the one man," writes one of the most eminent of the alumni, "who had most influenced me in life." Says another, "I revered him more than any man I ever knew." No lapse of time, no association with other men, seemed to alter their feelings toward him. And now that he is gone, what a flood of recollections pours in upon the mind! How vividly will be called up the old school days: the manifold ways in which the Doctor's influence was brought to bear upon them; the Thursday night lectures, the Sunday evening hymn; the Confirmation class; the closing address of the year, always strong and apposite; the Doctor's study, the chapel, and, above all, the weekly sermons in the Old Chapel! His influence was astonishing. No boy ever escaped it. Why or how it should be so, there might be difference of opinion, but no one questioned the fact. If one were disposed now to seek the explanation, several causes suggest themselves at once. First of all, there was his enthusiasm for goodness: here was a man in whom there was no compromise with things

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base or low. Then there was his big, loving heart, which always went out tenderly to the offender, no matter how much it scorned the offence. Finally, there was an inflexibility and steadfastness of will, which, in a world where vacillation is the rule, not only controlled but upheld those with whom he came in contact. Back of all these was an indefinable something which colored everything he did or said, a something which every one recognized, and which gave the note of distinction to the most trivial acts. His determination to aim at the highest and never to be pulled down to the world's standards had a bracing effect upon his colleagues as well as upon the boys. To the latter he was a sort of conscience; they could not face him in a question of right and wrong. Indeed, his old boys never wholly rid themselves of this feeling, and it would be quite true to say that many an alumnus has been deterred from visiting the school when his course of life was such that he could not safely brave an "interview with the Doctor."

If one turns from his relations with individuals to his administration of the school in general, his marvellous power is equally apparent. His handling of the great charge committed to him might fairly be called statesmanship. No one who has never been connected with a great school can form

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any adequate conception of the labor, the unbroken strain, the burden that devolves upon the head master: he is the responsible person; he is the one that can never afford to neglect anything or any one, or to overlook the most insignificant of the enormous mass of details. But Dr. Coit was equal to all this. His patience and courage seemed invincible. Never in a hurry, always calm, alert against every emergency, he spent himself unreservedly for those who were confided to his care. And he was a very wise man. He knew how to disregard things essentially trivial and unimportant, and to concentrate his efforts upon what was vital. In his dealings with masters this was most noticeable. He did not condescend to petty interference with their methods, and rarely indulged in personal criticism; they had full scope to succeed or fail. If he had to rebuke, he had a unique power of veiling his censure under some broad generalization, which, however, went straight to its mark. Certainly, his method worked well, and no head of a school ever had more devoted or loyal assistants. They felt that he really cared for them, and that the bond between them was not contingent upon success. The one thing he demanded was a faithful discharge of duty, and that, not merely for the interests of the school, but on the broader ground of principle. His sym-

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pathy and great appreciativeness called forth what was best in them. They knew that their efforts and sacrifices for the good of St. Paul's were noted. Indeed, it was a striking characteristic of this large community of men and boys that no one felt that he was merged in the crowd, or that he could pursue his own way, either for good or evil, quite unobserved.

The ethical quality in Dr. Coit's equipment was so strong and dominating that one might be led, especially at this time, to overlook the intellectual side. But it is obvious that no man could have been the power that he was without a powerful understanding. It was the mind of genius, only genius consecrated. For many years past he had done but little teaching, owing to the stress of other work, but in the early days of the school he always took the higher classes in Latin and Greek. Who, that had the privilege of reading Horace or Homer under him, will ever forget those delightful and stimulating lessons? He was a perfect master of terse and happy translation. We used to think that the rendering came from his lips in iambic pentameters quite ready for the press. He knew the standard classics through and through, had absorbed them, and had that culture which seems to come from nothing else so well as from the study of the dead languages, and which is cer-

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tainly its best fruit. This culture was the foundation of a literary instinct that rarely failed. His judgments about books and literature were wonderfully sound and penetrating. He hated trash. No amount of public approbation could influence his opinion about a book which seemed to him worthless, especially if it was impure or irreligious. In fact, the merely intellectual, when divorced from the moral, had no interest for him; for him impure art was always bad art, and to read a vicious book for style, as people are sometimes recommended to do, seemed to him absurd as well as wrong. His own reading had been wide and deep, and furnished material to an unusual faculty of illustration. This appeared in his sermons and addresses as well as in class work. The weekly Thursday night talk to the boys, familiarly known as the Rector's Lecture, was one of the most conspicuous examples of his masterly power of dealing with the boys in a body. There was never anything dull about it, but, whether the subject was a general school topic, or else some special tendency or abuse that needed correction, he brought to bear all his wonderful discernment of boy character, and pressed it home with a force of expression always persuasive, often humorous, sometimes with a keen and searching irony that was irresistible. Old boys will agree with the writer that this

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Thursday talk was a very important factor in maintaining the tone and tradition of St. Paul's.

In speaking of his sermons, one is on different ground. That he was a preacher of great spiritual force could never be doubted by those who listened to him Sunday after Sunday, whose hearts were touched, and whose consciences were stimulated by the words of beauty and power that fell from his lips. We think he would have been a great preacher, even in the world's opinion, had his lot fallen in public places, with pastoral work his first duty. As things were, it seems marvellous that he found time to write sermons at all, when one remembers his custom of preparing the Sunday "instruction," as he would sometimes call it, on a Saturday morning in his study, with the door wide open, amid constant interruption from boys or masters on school matters.

Indeed, he was rarely absent from his Study, for he felt that it was the head master's duty to be at the centre of his work and accessible to his boys at all times. What wonder that forty years of such toil, such routine, such patient threshing over of the same matter with generation after generation of strenuous youth, should at last wear him out! Dr. Coit's premature death was a sacrifice to as high a sense of duty, and to as consistent a following of it, as we have ever known.

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He will be remembered as the great Schoolmaster. The parallel with Dr. Arnold is an obvious one, but the two men were, in most respects, quite dissimilar. They were alike in this: they had shown, each for his own country, the possibility of herding large numbers of boys in community life without the vicious and sordid accompaniments that had hitherto been thought necessary evils, and of inspiring a genuine religious tone to the utmost extent that the undeveloped nature of the young will admit. But Dr. Coit was an imitator of no one, and it is an error to suppose that he modelled St. Paul's School after any English type. His educational ideas were not novel; we should say that they were substantially those that were held by most American educators fifty years ago. Like all born leaders of men, he had strong convictions; all questions were not open ones to him, and among these questions one he regarded as settled, namely, that the study of the dead languages is the best and only basis of a sound education. What was novel about the school he created was the extraordinary tone and the noble Christian traditions which his splendid genius inspired. Let no one say that a large school cannot be kept comparatively free from vice in all its forms, for St. Paul's men know that it has been done.

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From his inner life we may not venture to remove the veil; this side of his character must be left untold. It was apparent to all where lay the true source of his wonderful power, whence came both the sweetness and the strength; he literally went from his knees to his work. In the last few years, those who knew him best felt that, though the energy and vigor were unimpaired, there was a growing detachment from the things of this world. His natural asceticism seemed to be intensified. His love for literature and the classics was waning, and a greater absorption than ever in the Bible and works of devotion was noticeable. Even his interest in the New Chapel, the completion of which had been so gratifying to him, and the value of which as an aid to true religion he so fully appreciated, was that of one whose mind was dwelling on "the story of the other side." Surely his heart was half in the other world. We might have fancied him lonely had we not known who his Companion was. And so the end came; and, as we return to the thought with which this notice of the Rector was begun, let us assure ourselves that his death is not really premature, but rather the noble crown of a noble work, which, coming thus suddenly, has thrown the flash-light upon the preciousness of the life lived. And his memory is no mere sentiment, but a mighty stimulus to per-

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severe, to be patient and wise and courageous in carrying on the work which he began.

My Brethren of the Alumni, it rests with you, as well as with us here, to see to it that this work endures.





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